Truth Try'd:

OR,

Mr. *AGATE*'s PRETENDED PLAIN-TRUTH Proved an UNTRUTH:

IN WHICH

MODERATE DISSENTERS are Vindicated from the *Imputation* of SCHISM, as charg'd upon them in his late *Pamphlets*; and the VALIDITY of *Presbyterian Ordination* is prov'd, both from *Scripture* and *Antiquity*.

By *JOHN WITHERS*.

JOB 11. 2, 3. *Should not the multitude of Words be answered? And should a Man full of Talk be Justified? Should thy Lies make Men hold their Peace? When thou Mockest shall no Man make thee asham'd?*

Familiare est omnibus etiam Hæreticis in publicis Congressibus se jactare, in Concionibus Dominari, in Conventibus gloriari, DISPUTATIONES cupide requirere. *Jesuitismi, Pars* 1. *p.* 92.

Dicebant (Manichæi) Veritas! Veritas! Et nunquam erat in eis. *Aug. Confes. L.* 3. *C.* 6.

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THE PREFACE.

I *Have in ſome former* Pamphlets *vindicated the* Diſſenters *from the Charge of* Jeſuitiſm *and* Rebellion, *ſo confidently advanced againſt 'em by Mr.* Agate; *in which I have proved many of his* Tales *to be abſolutely* falſe *in Matter of Fact, and abundance of his* Quotations *to be meer* Forgeries, *not found in the* Authors *he has cited, either in direct Terms, or by any neceſſary Conſequence; which I am ready to demonſtrate to any Gentleman who deſires ſatisfaction, and will believe his own Eyes. I have alſo proved from our moſt authentick* Records, *and particularly the Lord* Clarendon's *Hiſtory, That the* prime Managers, *and* firſt Authors *of the late unhappy War againſt King* Charles, *were Men of* Epiſcopal *Principles; and produced the Dying Teſtimony of that* Prince, *in which he declared, That it was for the* Militia *the* Parliament *began the War upon him. And by conſequence, the Motive which ingaged them in that Undertaking, could not be a Deſign to deſtroy the* Biſhops *and* Common-prayer, *as has been falſly and maliciouſly ſuggeſted.*

AS for the Deſign of this preſent Treatiſe, *the Reader may underſtand it by conſulting the* Title Page: *There is therefore no Occaſion that I ſhould ſay any thing of it in this* Preface, *which is only intended to vindicate my ſelf from ſome* Aſperſions *caſt upon me in Mr.* Agate's *late Libel againſt Mr.* Troſs.

THE firſt thing which I ſhall take Notice of, is his charging me with calling him Dog and Devil *; nay, with* calling God's Prieſts downright Devils. *Now had I really given*

* More Plain Truth, p. 17. 29.

ven him thoſe Characters, I can't ſee how this had been reviling God's Prieſts *in the plural Number, unleſs he hath got a* Pope *in his Belly. But the Truth on't is, the Accuſation is abſolutely* falſe *in Matter of Fact; for theſe are my very words:* The Moon loſes nothing of its ſplendor, though Dogs bark at it; and the Reputation of this Aged Gentleman [Mr. *Troſs*] ſuffers not much more, though a Creature of a more Noble, (and therefore more Criminal) Nature may open his black Mouth againſt him †. *Now with what Conſcience, with what Forehead, can this Gentleman tell the World that I call him* Dog, *when in expreſs Terms I affirm him to be a Creature of a* more Noble Nature? *As for the Title of* Devil, *I ſhould have been at a loſs on what he grounds his Charge, had I not received Directions from his own mouth: The Caſe in ſhort is this, He has thought fit to publiſh to the World in print, That there is not one* Reign in which I and my Followers have not promoted Rebellion, *&c. And that the* Engliſh Preſbyterians diſputed Her Majeſty's Succeſſion to the Throne. *Upon which, in my Anſwer to his* Expoſtulatory Letter, *I did challenge and defy him to prove theſe things,* Or OTHERWISE *(ſaid I)* People will conclude that you are influenced by him whoſe Character it is to be a Falſe Accuſer of the Brethren. *That is (ſays Mr.* Agate; *the* Devil. *So that he owns his Accuſation to be falſe) for my Charge againſt him is founded only upon that Suppoſition, that he cannot prove what he has aſſerted, as is plain by the word* otherwiſe, *which I make uſe of. Sure 'tis a very hard Caſe, that this* Gentleman *muſt aſſume to himſelf a Liberty of publiſhing ſuch malicious, bloody, and groundleſs Accuſations againſt us, and I not have leave to tell the World, that they are falſe; or if I do, that this muſt be calling* God's Prieſts downright Devils. *Is the* Prieſthood *become a Sanctuary for Calumnies and Slanders? Muſt theſe inglorious Vices find ſhelter there againſt the purſuit of* Truth *and* Juſtice? *But as the Caſe now ſtands, I may as well expect that the*

Æthiopian

Æthiopian *should change his Skin, and the* Leopard *his Spots, as that he, who has been accuſtomed to Slanders and falſe Quotations, ſhould cite his Authors like an honeſt Man, or keep himſelf within the ſtrict Bounds of Decency and Truth. I do once more call upon this Gentleman, for a* Proof, *or* Recantation, *of what he has aſſerted.*

UPON this Occaſion, I would remind Mr. Agate *of one Story. A little after* Her Majeſty's Acceſſion to the Throne, *there was a Book publiſhed by a ſeditious High-Flyer, one Dr.* Drake, " *who complained of a Licentious* " *Party in the Nation, who had entertained Hopes of gi-* " *ving us a new model of Government of their own pro-* " *jection. He pretended that this* Party *made it their-* " *Buſineſs to traduce the* Princeſs of Denmark *with* " *ſcandalous Aſperſions, promoting theſe Things with as* " *much Zeal as if a* Bill of Excluſion *had been on the* " *Anvil,* &c. *Upon this the* Houſe of Peers *ſummoned this Doctor before their Bar, where they propoſed to him theſe following Queſtions:* 1. *Whether he could charge any Perſon or Perſons in the Kingdom, with the Matters aſſerted by him.* 2. *Whether he heard any other Perſon ſay, That they could charge any Perſon whatſoever with the ſaid Matter? To which the Doctor anſwered, he knew of no ſuch Perſon. They* 3dly *demanded, Whether in thoſe Pamphlets which he pretended were the Occaſion of his Writing, there was any thing ſaid about ſetting aſide the preſent Queen? And the Doctor having confeſſed,* That he did not remember there was, *the Houſe proceeded to cenſure the abovenamed Expreſſions as ground-* " *leſs, falſe, and ſcandalous, tending to create Jealou-* " *ſies in* Her Majeſty *of her People, and to cauſe great* " *Miſunderſtandings, Fears and Diſputes amongſt the* " *Queens Subjects, and to diſturb the Peace and Quiet* " *of the Kingdom* †. *After which, they ordered the Attorney General effectually to proſecute the ſaid Doctor. I leave the Reader to judge, Whether* Mr. Agate, *in publickly*

† Hiſt. of *England*, Vol. 3, p. 836.

lickly affirming, That the Queen's Succeſſion was diſputed *by a great Number of her Subjects, when he can prove it againſt no Perſon whatſoever, is not as much an Incendiary as Dr.* Drake, *and whether he may not thank his own Obſcurity that his ſaucy and ſeditious Sermons and Libels have not expoſed him to the ſame Cenſure.*

ANOTHER Bill of Complaint exhibited againſt me in the ſame Pamphlet; is, That I vindicate the Blaſphemous Rights, [*p.* 30.] *and* take my Principles and Defence of them from that accurſed Book; *That* I fall in with the Deiſts of the Age, *and* lay the Prieſthood in common, *&c. It might have been expected from another Author, that my very words ſhould have been laid before the Readers Eyes, who might thereby judge, whether there is ſuch a world of Malignity and Venom in 'em as is pretended. But I conſider, 'tis none of Mr.* Agate's Talent *to prove his Allegations; for which Reaſon, I am not much ſurprized at it. The Truth on't is, I have not offered any thing which has the leaſt Tendency to lay the* Prieſthood in common, *as he terms it, or to encourage any to invade the Sacerdotal Function without a regular Admiſſion. Tis true, I look upon* Prelacy *as an* Humane Inſtitution; *I have produced my Reaſons for that Opinion, which* Mr. Agate *may diſprove if he can. As for the Book called the* Rights of the Church, *I confeſs, when it firſt made a Noiſe in the World, I borrowed it of a Friend, and having read it over, returned it to him again. And I do with all Solemnity declare, that I never tranſcribed 3 Lines from it; that I have not had it in my Study for ſome Years, nor read a Page in it whil'ſt compoſing the enſuing* Treatiſe. *'Tis pretended indeed by* Mr. Agate, That this Book is cry'd up by the Party, as the beſt Book that was ever written: *And he has been* told by a Perſon of Credit, That it has been diſperſed about this County at the Party's coſt *. *If he means the* Diſſenting Party, *'tis a downright Calumny;*

* Plain Truth, p. 339.

ny; *if any other* Party, *'tis a grand Impertinence*; *and we desire a little better Evidence of the matter than an Idle* Hearsay, *or Whimsical Conjecture. On* Septemb. 10. 1707. *there was a Sermon preached in this City before the* Dissenting Ministers *of* Devon *and* Cornwal, *by* Mr. John Enty; *in which he represented the* Rights of the Christian Church, *as a very PROPHANE and SCANDALOUS Book in* many Instances, *p.* 4. *This Sermon was printed at the Desire of the said* Ministers, *and my self among the rest. Which is a Demonstration, that we* dislike many *of those Principles that are contained in it*; *and that no Regard is to be had to such as would pretend the contrary.*

ANOTHER Article *exhibited against me in* More Plain Truth, *is, That I call* Christ's Spiritual Body Mystical Nonsense [*p.* 30.] *'Tis true, I thought I had just Reason to smile at his fantastical Distinction betwixt Christ's* Natural Body in Heaven, *and his* Spiritual Body in the Sacrament. *If he thinks this Notion defensible, let him inform us of the Difference, betwixt Christ's* Natural *and* Spiritual Body; *and how one and the same Body (call it Natural or Spiritual) may be in Ten Thousand distant Places at one and the same Time: if this be not* Mystical Nonsense, Transubstantiation *it self may pass for a sound and reasonable Doctrine.*

Mr. Agate *having* insulted *me in a publick Coffee House, as though my* Syllogisms *were contrary to the Rules of* Logick, *because made up of* Negative *Propositions*; *and quarrelling with them in the beginning of his Book, as one or two of his Brethren have done in the presence of some Gentlemen that I could name, I shall therefore cite* 3 *or* 4 *of the most Eminent* Logicians, *authorizing such* Syllogisms *as mine are: 'Tis true, we have in* Sanderson *(the only System perhaps my Adversary ever saw) this Maxim*; Neq; negativis recte concludere si vis; *but every School-Boy can tell him, that there is seldom a General Rule without an Exception*; *which he may find in*

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Burgerſdicius *his Logick, printed at* Cambridge 1637, Si Negatio ſit Pars Medii, bonus Syllogiſmus ex duabus negantibus conficitur, p. 185. Ex. gr.

Quod non ſentit non eſt Animal:
Planta non ſentit:
Ergo Planta non eſt Animal.

To the ſame purpoſe his Countryman Herebord *delivers his Opinion in the following Syllogiſm:*

Si Planta non eſt Animal, non ſentit
Sed Planta non eſt Animal:
Ergo Planta non ſentit. *Heer. Log. p.* 223.

I may next ſend Mr. Agate *to* Oxford, *to conſult Dr.* Crackenthorp's *Logick, 4to. p.* 212. *who affirms this to be a regular Syllogiſm:*

Si non eſt Animal, non eſt Homo;
Sed non eſt Animal:
Ergo non eſt Homo.

And whereas I am ſcoffingly demanded, what Mode *my Hypothetical Syllogiſm falls under, I will refer him to the famous Philoſopher Monſieur* Derodon, *who in his Philoſophical Works, printed at* Geneva 1669, *p.* 669, *will inform him, how* Hypothetical, *as well as* Categorical Syllogiſms, *may be in Mode and Figure.* Ex. gr.

Si nullus Homo eſt Brutum, nullus Homo eſt Aſinus:
Sed nullus Homo eſt Brutum:
Ergo nullus Homo eſt Aſinus.

The Inſtitutiones Logicæ *may be alſo conſulted on this Head, p.* 153. *printed at* Oxon 1685.

I take it for granted, that who ever underſtands Logical Terms, underſtands alſo Latin; I ſhall therefore only acquaint the Engliſh Reader, that theſe Syllogiſms are all made up of Negative *Propoſitions juſt like mine, and yet affirmed to be true and regular, by the greateſt Maſters in* England, France *and* Holland. *And when Mr.* Agate *demands of us,* What Logick we make uſe of in our private Academies; *I might reply upon him, With what Confidence he can aſſume the Title of* Maſter of Arts, *when he underſtands not a true Syllogiſm from a falſe.*

Truth Tryd:

OR,

An Answer to Mr. *AGATE*'s Pretended *Plain Truth.*

IF we consult the Temper and Inclination of *Humane Nature*, we shall find, that the Generality of Mankind are apt to entertain too good an Opinion of *themselves*, and to look upon their *Intellectual* and *Moral Endowments* thro' a Magnifying-Glass, that represents them more Considerable than indeed they are Men are usually as fond of their *Notions*, as of their *Children*, doting as much upon the issue of their Brain, as that of their Body; and licking the Cubs of their own Fancy, tho' never so misshapen and deformed. Did we proceed no further, a great deal might be offered to excuse, or at least extenuate, this Frailty and Indulgence: But the Mischief of it is, those ugly Vices of *Pride* and *Passion* are so predominant and rampant in this degenerate Estate, into which we are fallen; this subtile Poison, which proceeded first from the Contagious Breath of the *Old Serpent*, hath so insinuated it self into Mens Minds, that they are apt to look upon every *Dissent* from them, as an Undervaluing their Judgments, and an Affront to their superior Understandings: And as a Consequence of this, they quarrel, and grow angry with all such as do not see with their Eyes, or refuse to fall down and worship the *idol* they set up, although perhaps 'tis but a *Calf*. They are for cutting such Throats as cannot swallow their rugged *Maxims*, and tearing out such Stomachs as cannot concoct their indigested *Notions*.

IF we consult the *Records* of the CHURCH, and trace it through all its various *Periods* and *Revolutions*, we shall find, that there is scarce any thing which *passionate* and *angry* Men have made greater use of to serve their own Designs, than these two Words, HERESY and SCHISM. These are the Firebrands

which *Eccleſiaſtical Combatants* have been fiercely hurling at one another's Heads, and enkindled thoſe Flames, by which the *Church* has been endangered, and *Chriſtian Charity* almoſt conſumed. Nor may we ſuppoſe, that this *Cenſorious Humour* prevails only in theſe Degenerate Ages of the World, in which our Lot is fallen.

THE *Apoſtles* had not been long dead, before the *Aſian Churches* were Excommunicated for a pack of *Schiſmaticks* by the peeviſh *Roman Biſhop*, for this very weighty Reaſon, *Becauſe they kept not their* Eaſter *on the ſame Day preciſely with him.* And ſome time after, St. *Cyprian*, with his *African Colleagues*, met with the ſame uncharitable Treatment from one of his Succeſſors. But it muſt be confeſſed, that the preſent *Roman Church* hath ſignalized it ſelf above all others in Atchievements of this Nature. *Herey* and *Schiſm* are words made uſe of as ſo many *Eccleſiaſtical Bugbears* to ſcare her *deluded Children* from the *Proteſtant Communion.* So that Mr. *Agate* walks not in an untrodden Path, when with ſuch great Diſdain and Scorn he tramples on his *Diſſenting Brethren*; but has the Hotſpurs of all Ages to bear him Company. Whoever conſults the Nature, Scope and Tendency of this *Gentleman*'s Performances, will find them ſtuffed with ſuch *furious Invectives* againſt DISSENTERS, ſuch an abundance of *Forgeries*, and *downright Falſhoods*, that his Deſign can never be to convince them of their *Errors*; but to render them *odious* and *deteſtable* in the Eyes of the weak and injudicious Vulgar.

TO this End he begins his *laſt Book*, by declaiming againſt the Conſequences of *Schiſm*. *Such People* (he ſays) *cut themſelves off from the Body of Chriſt, and forfeit all the Priviledges of Chriſtianity.* They are *without the Covenant*, and *there is not one Promiſe in the Goſpel to which they have any Claim* [p. 271.] The meaning of which ſeems to be this, That the *Diſſenters* are a pack of *Infidels* and *Pagans*, and deſerve to be treated accordingly. That *Schiſm* is a Sin, is a Thing acknowledged on all Hands: But ſhould every Sin exclude Men from all Hopes of *Goſpel Pardon*, I wonder who can be Saved! 'For we have all 'erred and ſtrayed from God's Ways like loſt Sheep; as the *Church of England* very well confeſſes. But the Queſtion is, Whether there is in *Schiſm* ſuch a *peculiar Malignity*, above all other Vices, as that it cuts Men off from *Chriſt's Body*, and makes them ceaſe to be *Chriſtians*? This is a Notion to which I cannot eaſily ſubſcribe; for were it true, it would invalidate the *Orders* of all our *Engliſh Clergy*, and leave them in as bad

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a Condition as the poor *Diſſenters* are pretended to be: Which I thus demonſtrate upon Mr. *Agate*'s own Principles.

THERE is this Day a *Notorious Schiſm* between the Church of *Rome*, and that of *England*; and therefore, one of theſe two Churches, with its Biſhops and Rulers, muſt be *ſchiſmatical*. My *Antagoniſt* cannot acquit the *Infallible Gentlemen* on the other ſide the Waters of this crime, without condemning himſelf, and cutting his own Throat: We will therefore lay this ugly Brat at her door, who has, without Diſpute, the faireſt Title to it. Notwithſtanding all which, that *Apoſtolical Succeſſion*, to which our Biſhops do pretend, is derived through this very Church. Our *Firſt Reformers* were Ordained by *popiſh*, and therefore by *ſchiſmatical Prelates*: But now, did their Schiſm cut them off from the *Body of Chriſt*, (as this *Gentleman* affirms) their *Adminiſtrations* muſt be all null and void. How can they who have put themſelves OUT of the Church, act as Officers IN the Church? Can they be *out* and *in* at the ſame time? Did they cut themſelves off from *Chriſt's Body*, how could they officiate as principal *Members* in it? Can that *Head*, which is ſeparated from the *Members*, convey to any of them thoſe Spirits which are the Fountain of all Motion and Senſation? Can they be Stewards in a Corporation who do not belong unto it, and have no Intereſt in any of thoſe Priviledges which are mentioned in their Charter? Every one ſees that this is impracticable. So that if *Schiſm* cuts off from the Church, there is an End of the *Apoſtolical Succeſſion*, with which we have been amuſed.

OUR *Clergy* do all derive from Biſhops, who had *cut themſelves off* from the Church, who therefore could communicate no manner of *Authority* or *Juriſdiction* unto others. Theſe are Conſequences which do juſtly and neceſſarily flow from Mr. *Agate*'s Scheme, which his purblind Paſſion did not permit him to obſerve; and therefore he purſues the *Diſſenters* with ſuch a furious Violence, that he breaks his own Neck in the chaſe.

NOR are the *Roman Catholicks* (from whom this Notion hath been borrowed) in any better Caſe than others, according to their own Principles. *Onuphrius* (an Author of their own) reckons no leſs than Thirty *Schiſms* in that Church, in all which there were oppoſite Biſhops and Altars ſet up. One of theſe *Schiſms* continued for 50 Years together, as others did for ſeveral, though not ſo many. In all which, the falſe *Popes* made *Biſhops* and *Prieſts* as well as the true; and 'tis highly probable that there is ſcarce a Clergy-man in *Europe*, who derives not his Succeſſion from one or other of theſe *ſchiſmatical* Popes. But

how could he, as *Head* of the Church, communicate any Influence or Authority to the Members of that Body, from which he had cut himself off by reason of his Schism? All which makes it pretty probable, that the Asserters of this Notion do not believe it, though they make use of it as an Engine to screw up Mens Prejudices and Passions to an excessive Heighth against their Brethren.

'TIS further worthy our Observation, that none are more ready to lay this Monster at other Peoples doors than they who have themselves the justest Title to it. Who greater *Schismaticks* than the *Ancient Donatists*? And yet none more ready to condemn all those for such, who did not approve their mad Freaks. Who more ready than the *Papists* to apply Mr. *Agate*'s Doctrine to all that are not of their own Communion? And to pronounce them cut off from *Christ's Body*? Whilst they themselves are the greatest Tearers and Confounders of it in the whole World. Who more *cruel* and *uncharitable* in their Censures on *Dissenters*, than Mr. *Lesly*, Mr. *Dodwel*, and the rest of the Nonjurant Tribe? And yet these very Men have since maintained a Separation from the Church of *England*: And, which is the greatest Jest of all, have consigned us over to *Damnation* in a Lump, for breaking the *Unity* of *that* Church, whose Communion they have themselves forsaken, for Fear, as they have publickly declared, of hazarding their Salvation by a continuance in it. But to omit these things.

LET us consider, whether Mr. *Agate*'s Notion of *Schism* be so exact and adequate as he would fain perswade us. 'Tis by him defined to be *an unnecessary Separation from an Establish'd Church* [p. 271.] But if this be an accurate Definition, how came there to be Schisms in the Church of *Corinth*, in which there was no Separation? For *they came together into one place*, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20. Again, if this Scheme is exact, there could be no Schism in the *Christian World*, for the first 300 Years, there being no such thing as a *Church Established*. Once more; as the Church of *England* is now by Law established, so should the supream Powers revoke this Establishment, a Separation from it, according to this Notion, would be no *Schism*. According to this Definition, 'tis the *Law establishing* that makes the Sin, and the same power that makes, can also annihilate and destroy. So that our *Separation* will not appear *criminal*, because 'tis what the Law *allows*, that very *Law* to which the Church it self owes its *Establishment*. These are Consequences which do necessarily flow from the Definition which this Gentleman has given us.

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IF Mr. *Agate* is desirous to know my Sense of the Matter, I take the very *malignity* and *venom* of *Schism* to consist in *Uncharitableness*. Hence, such as *causelessly* condemn and censure their *Fellow-Christians*; that are inspired with *Rage* and *Bitterness*; that are for *tearing* and *confounding* all those who do not concur with them in their *Humours* and *Opinions*; I take such, whether they go to *Church* or *Meeting*, to be the Real *Schismaticks*, and the Persons against whom the Scriptures denounce so many Woes. 'Is there not an Hatred of the Brethren 'in all Schisms (*says St.* Austin)? Who can affirm the contrary, 'when both the Original of Schism, and the pertinacious Con-'tinuance in it, is nothing else but an Hatred of the Brethren? * This is the Notion that Learned *Father* went upon, and by which he justified his tragical Complaints, and bitter Exclamations, against the *Donatists*. And I wish, that some of our mighty *Zealots* may not be found at last possessed of the same Spirit.

IF this Description of *Schism* be thought too general, then we may suppose it to consist in a *breach* of that sacred Union, which Christ has instituted and made necessary in his Church, and the whole Controversy will at last be resolved into this Question; Whether we are obliged, by a Divine Command, to be united to the *Episcopat*; or whether *Prelacy* has a *Jus Divinum* stamp'd upon it? And this is what will be more largely spoken to in the sequel of this Discourse. In the mean time, the Answer which I return to Mr. *Agate*'s Syllogism is this, that we do not separate from the Established Church in those Things in which we are obliged to be united with it.

THESE things premised, I come to the Defence of my Argument, which was thus propounded by me: "If we are not se-"parated from the Church, in any thing in which we are obli-"ged to be united to it, then we are not guilty of a Damning "Schism. But we are not separated from the Church in any "thing, in which we are obliged to be united to it; therefore, *&c.* Or, if Mr. *Agate* be better pleased with his own methodizing of my Syllogism, he shall have his way: "They that "are united to the Church in all things they are obliged to be "united to it, are not guilty of Schism. But the Dissenters (I "plead for) are thus united, therefore, *&c.*

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* *Annon est in Schismate Odium fraternum? Quis hoc dixerit cum & Origo & Pertinacia Schismatis nulla sit alia nisi Odium fraternum. Augustin. de Bap. cont. Donat. L. 1. c. 11.*

IN diſcourſing of the various Points of *Union* incumbent on all Chriſtians, I purſued the Method laid down by the late Mr. Arch-Deacon *Burſcough*, in his celebrated Piece of *Schiſm*. And if I can defend the various Parts of my Argument againſt the trivolous Exceptions of my Opponent, I have gained my Point, and made good the Poſt I undertook to defend. In purſuance of which Deſign, I ſhall not make a particular Reply to all thoſe *ſcurrilous Reflections* with which his Book abounds; nor to all thoſe *intemperate Sallies* and *Excurſions* which may be found therein: That ſo I may be more large and ample in my Diſcourſe on thoſe points, in which the *Heart* and *Eſſence* of the Controverſy doth conſiſt.

1. I granted, that *Chriſtians* are obliged to be united in the ſame *Faith*; and we are thus united to the Church of *England*: For though we ſubſcribe but 36 of the 39 *Articles*, yet it cannot be pretended but that all the Eſſential and Fundamental Articles of the *Chriſtian Faith* are comprehended in them: Nor durſt Mr. *Agate* affirm that we are ſeparated from the Churches Faith in any *neceſſary* point thereof Whether we, like the *Meletians* and *Donatiſts*, are Schiſmaticks upon any other account, is the thing to be conſidered under the following Heads.

2. I obſerved in the ſecond place, that Chriſtians are obliged to be united in *Love*. And 'twas frankly owned by me, that we ought to love the Members of the *Eſtabliſhed Church*, not only as Men, but as Fellow-Chriſtians, as Proteſtants and Heirs of the ſame *Hope*. If there were any that *ſaid* or *thought* otherwiſe, I publickly diſclaimed them. In anſwer to this, Mr. *Agate* harps upon an old jarring String, the *Civil War*, when *the Clergy were ruined, and their Wives and Children turn'd to Door* [p.275] But is it a neceſſary Conſequence, that I can't love a Churchman becauſe the *Long-Parliament* bore too hard upon ſome Clergymen, who oppoſed them in their War againſt the *King*. I may as well argue, that becauſe Arch-biſhop *Laud*, and his High-Church Faction, turned Clergymen with their Families out a Starving, who durſt not encourage Dancing upon Sundays; therefore Mr. *Agate* muſt needs bear a mortal Hatred to all the Conſciencious Obſervers of that ſacred Day: Or to give a later Inſtance, becauſe the Church of *England* deprived ſeveral of her own *Biſhops* and *Clergy* of their Benefices, for their Noncompliance with the late *Revolution*, leaving them, their Wives and Children, to the wide World; therefore ſhe can have no real Kindneſs for any of the Function. Theſe Conſequences are as

juſt

just and necessary, as the Inference which Mr. *Agate* makes, That the *Dissenters* can't possibly love the *Clergy*, because some of them met with the Fate that usually attends a *Vanquished Party*; and were *rigorously* dealt with by their Conquerors, at the conclusion of an *intestine, cruel War*.

'TIS further urged by this *Gentleman*, That the *Episcopal Church* has been called *the Whore of Babylon*, and *her Priests greedy Dogs* [p. 276.] and I know not what besides. But is this the Language of me, or any *Dissenter* this Day in *England*? Did I not publickly tell him, and all the World, that I would not be an Advocate for any who should use such rude uncharitable Expressions? And where is the Conscience or Honour of objecting to me, the things which I was never guilty of my self, and have openly disclaimed in others? But says this Gentleman, *Why do not the Dissenters joyn with us in breaking Bread, and in Prayers; without which, all Pretences to Christian Charity are false* [p. 277.]. If this be a true Notion, my *Antagonist* has no Charity for any but the Members of his Church; for there is no other Christian Society in the World with whom he can join in Communion, according to his own Principles. Nay, *one moiety* of the *Established* Church, I believe I may say *two parts in three* thereof, can by this Rule have no Charity for it, because they never yet *brake Bread* in it. This Doctrine makes Schismaticks of multitudes of the most *furious Zealots*, and *fiercest Scorners* of the *Dissenters* in the whole Kingdom. Besides, the *Dissenters* have but small Encouragement to demonstrate their *charity*, by communicating with the Church, when for this very Action they shall be condemned for *Blasphemy*, *Hypocrisy*, for *ridiculing their very God, and making a Jest of all Religion*. In one word, though this *Gentleman*'s Charity may be confined within the narrow limits of that particular Church, with which alone he can joyn in *Prayers and breaking of Bread*; yet we hope we can truly thank God, that ours is of a more large extensive Nature. After all, he professes himself to be *in Charity with all Men*, even with *the Presbyterians themselves* [p. 278.] and hopes *this may be done without joyning in Communion with them*. And why may not I affirm the very same thing in relation to our *Episcopal* Brethren's.

3. THE third thing in which Christians are obliged to be united, is, *Divine Worship*; which may be considered, either as to its *Essence*, or to those *Rites* and *Circumstances* with which it is attended. As to the *Substance* of *Divine Worship*, I urged, That in this we agree with the *Church of England*, adoring

ring the same *Supreme Being*, in and through JESUS the *Mediater*; and participating of the same *Sacraments*. This is what Mr. *Agate* cannot deny. But instead of *Arguing*, he pursues his old Trade of *Scolding* at us, pretending, that we salute our *Maker* with *Blasphemy*, *Nonsense*, and *Kitchinstuff*, [p. 279.] Were this true in Matter of Fact, 'tis strange that no *one Instance* can be given of it, when our *Meeting-House-Doors* are always open, where many do sometimes repair out of meer Curiosity, and others on purpose to Cavil and find Fault. So that this looks more like the *Tattle* of some *idle Gossip*, than the *Affirmation* of a *Philosopher*, or *Divine*. As for the Objection *That we are not rightly Ordain'd*, I shall suspend my Answer to it at present, because I shall more largely speak to that Head in the sequel of this Discourse.

I observed in my *Defence*, That *One Lord*, *One Faith*, *One Baptism*, *One God and Father of all*, are mentioned by Saint *Paul* as the Grand Terms of *Christian Concord*, Eph. 4. 5, 6. not *One Ceremony*, or *Mode of Worship*. To this Mr. *Agate* replies, *That every Member of the Christian Church must also own the same Government, and submit to the same Discipline*, [p. 280.] But who told him so? There is no such Expression to be found in my Bible; and I wonder who gave him an Authority to make such Additions to *God's Word*! Besides, the *Church of England* acknowledges in her very *Liturgy*, *That she has not now the same GODLY DISCIPLINE that was in the Primitive Church*. Whence it must follow, (according to Mr. *Agate*'s Doctrine) that she has made a *schismatical Departure* from the *Primitive Church*, and cannot be a *Member* of the same Body with it. But this *Gentleman* confesses in so many words, *That the Point of Schism does not consist in differing about Matters of Faith, and the Essentials of Worship* [p. 280.] And there is no Reason we should spend much Time in Disputes that are remote from the main Controversy.

AS we are united to the *Church of England* in the *Substance of Divine Worship*, so 'tis owned, that we are not united in those *Ceremonies* with which it is cloathed, those *Rites* and *Circumstances* with which it is attended. And the *Question* between us is, Whether we are *Obliged*, by any *Divine* or *Humane Law*, to worship *God* with the same *External Rites*, and *Variable Modes*, that the *Established Church* now does? As for the *Law of God*, it commands us, To *assemble our selves together* for the Participation of *Gospel Ordinances*; to acknowledge *God's Sovereignty* over us, and our *Dependance* upon him: But whether we must Pray *Standing* or *Kneeling*, *with* or

without

without a Form; or how many *Congregations* there must be, within such or such a Precinct; is what we do not find determined in all the sacred Volumes. To this Mr. *Agate* replies, *That though the* Act of Uniformity *be not to be found in the Bible in express Terms, yet Obedience to Ecclesiastical and Civil Governours, in all Lawful Matters, is plainly written in it*, [page 281.] On the other Hand, we plead in our own Vindication, That we are not guilty of any *Disobedience* to the *Civil Magistrate*: And whether *Diocesan Bishops* are appointed by *Jesus Christ*, to be the *Governours* of his Church, this being the very *Hinge* on which the whole *Controversy* turns, will be more largely considered under another Head.

IN the mean time, we are to examine, whether these *Scriptures* which this *Gentleman* produces, do enforce *Conformity* to all those *External* Forms of Worship, which our *Brethren* are so delighted with. The first Text insisted on, [*p.* 283.] is that of *John* 17. 21, 22. in which our *Saviour* prays, That *his Followers may be ONE, as he and his Father are ONE*. Now 'tis certain that these Words must not be taken in their most strict and rigid Sense; the Father and the Son are declared to be essentially One. But 'tis absolutely impossible that all Christians should be in this Sense *ONE*; or that there should be the same Unity betwixt them, that there is betwixt the Persons in the sacred Trinity. And therefore Dr. *Whitby* thus Paraphrases our Saviour's Words, That they may be *ONE* in us, *i. e.* by *the Participation of that Spirit, which is in Me*. Thus they that are joined to the Lord, are said to be one Spirit, that is, they are animated and enlivened by the same *Holy Ghost*, which was without Measure poured out upon the Blessed *Jesus*. And I hope both *Churchmen* and *Dissenters* may participate of the same *Spirit*, tho' they do not say their Prayers in the same *Words*; and that their *Souls* may be adorned with the same *Graces*, tho' their Foreheads are not sign'd with the same *Cross*.

Again, St. *Paul* beseeches the *Corinthians*, that there be *no Divisions among them, but that they be perfectly joined together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment*, 1 Cor. 1. 10. That is, in the same Belief, and in the same kind Affections one towards another, as the above-named Doctor Comments on these Words. And the *Divisions* for which this Church is blamed, are expounded by Contentions in the following Verse, by *Strife* and *Envy*, 1 Cor. 3. 3. Now, if there be any *Dissenters* who are Envious and Quarrelsome, Outrageous in their Temper, or Cruel in their Censures; if there be any who have

their Minds Hag-ridden by these Infernal Furies: Let them be condemn'd for *Schismaticks* with all my Heart; I'll not be their Advocate. But then the Question will still remain, Whether these ugly Passions are not more predominant in Mr. *Agate* and his Tribe, than among my Friends?

In the next Place, we are presented with these Texts of Scripture, in which *Peace* and *Friendship* are recommended to us; Thus we are enjoyn'd, *To follow the Things that make for Peace*; *To live peaceably with all Men, as much as in us lieth, and to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* That we are obliged to govern our selves by the Rules here prescribed, is what we readily confess. But why may we not live peaceably, as becomes Christians, and Fellow-Citizens, and yet indulge each Other in our various Sentiments, about external *Modes* and *Ceremonies*? What necessity is there that we should scratch out one anothers Eyes, because they are not of the same Colour, or perhaps do not see Objects through the same Glasses? Why should my Neighbour quarrel with me, for not hearing the same Minister as he does, any more than for not consulting the same Physician? St. *Paul* will tell us, that the best way to keep the *Unity of the Spirit* in the *Bond of Peace*, is *to forbear one another in Love*, Eph. 4. 2, 3. The same Apostle supposes, that the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Converts might have different Apprehensions about several Matters, without *violating* the sacred *Bonds of Peace*: Only, *He that eateth, must not despise him that eateth not; nor he that eateth not, judge him that eateth*, Rom. 14. 3.

I know 'tis buz'd about by the *Wasps* of the Nation, *That We are the Men who disturb the Tranquillity of the Kingdom.* But 'tis no new thing for the *Wolf* to quarrel with the *Lamb*, for troubling tho'e Waters which his own Feet had muddied. The *Apostles* themselves were described, as Men that *turned the World upside down*: 'And the *Primitive Christians* (as Dr. 'Cave observes) were looked upon, by their *Pagan* Neigh-'bours, as the Pests of Humane Society, counted and called the 'Common Enemies of Mankind*. The truth on't is, there is a mighty Difference betwixt the *Occasion*, and proper *Cause* of Mischief. The *Gospel* it self was the *occasion* of Feuds and Animosities; but far enough from being the real *cause* thereof. *I came not* (says out Saviour) *to send Peace, but a Sword; to set a Man at Variance against his Father*, &c. *Mat.* 10. 34, 35. Not that this was the End and Design of his *Incarnation*; nor were

* *Primitive Christianity*, pt. 1. p. 67.

were these dismal Consequences to be imputed to the *Doctrine* which *He* and his *Disciples* taught; but to the rampant *Pride* and boisterous *Passions* of those Wretches, who were so bitterly incensed against *it*, and all its *Professors*. What *We* desire is, To Live *peaceable* and *quiet Lives*, under the *Auspicious Government* of our Most Gracious QUEEN; And to Enjoy our *civil* and *religious Priviledges*: And whil'st this is *The ONLY Thing* We aim at, We can't think our selves responsible for those *Feuds* and *Quarrels* which may be occasioned by the *Sons of Thunder*, who Rattle, and Spit Fire, when they cannot Crush and Tear us in Pieces.

ANOTHER Text which Mr. *Agate* urges is, *Phil.* 2. 2. in which the *Apostle* conjures the *Philippians To be of One Accord*, and *One Mind* [p. 283.] The meaning of which cannot be, that we should jump exactly in the same *Notions*, or embrace the very same *Opinions*, in all Things: This is impracticable in its own Nature, nor are all the Members of the *Church of England* thus of *One Mind*, or ever will be. Wherefore, *to be like-minded, is to have the same Love one to another*, as the Phrase is expounded in the beginning of this very Verse. And as the *Mind* includes the *whole Soul*, with all its Faculties and Powers; so to be of *One Mind*, denotes rather the Harmony of the *Affections*, than of the *Judgment*. The latter is not to be expected, whil'st Mens Capacites, Tempers and Educations are so vastly different; the former is a Duty, to which all who call themselves *Christians* are indispensably obliged.

AGAIN; St. *Paul* beseeches the *Romans* in these words, *Mark them which cause* Divisions *and* Offences, *contrary to the Doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them.* Which Text Dr. *Hammond*, an Episcopal Divine of Great Note, thus paraphrases: 'Take Notice of them which teach New Doctrines, 'either *contrary* or *different* from what we have taught you, 'and so break the Peace of the Church, and discourage and 'drive away others from the Faith. From *such Heretical Teachers* you are to separate. Now, if Mr. *Agate* can find any *Dissenter* who teaches a Doctrine that is *Anti-Apostolical*, I should wish, that a *Brand of Infamy* was set upon his Forehead, that all might fly from the Contagion.

MOREOVER, we read in the Holy Scriptures of *False Prophets*, *Grievous Wolves*, and *Murderers* [p. 284.] Therefore we are obliged to say our Prayers by a *Form*, and Baptize our Children with *Godfathers*, and the *sign of the Cross*. Are not these plain Consequences! Are not the *Dissenters* an obstinate and stubborn Generation, that can withstand the Force of such

cogent Arguments as these! If the *Wolf* may be known by his greediness after Prey, and his devouring tearing Qualities; If the *Hater of his Brother*, who is said to be a *Murderer*, may be descried by publishing *outrageous Calumnies*, and *bloody Slanders* against him; These Characters will be found upon some who are far enough from *Dissenters*: In the mean time, we have nothing but this *Gentleman*'s word for it, that these Titles belong to us.

I can't imagine the Reason why Mr. *Agate* should subjoyn the *Texts* that follow, unless it be to make up his Number. 'Tis true, St. *Paul* reckons *Hatred*, *Variance*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Seditions* and *Heresies*, amongst the *Works of the Flesh* [p. 284.] But have the *Dissenters* engross'd those Vices to themselves? Are our *High-Flyers* made up of pure Love and Kindness? If *Hatred* be the Reverse to *Charity*, I fear it may be sometimes found *lurking* under a Crape Gown. 'Tis one character of *Charity*, that it *thinketh no Evil*: But there is a certain *Clergyman* in the World, who can speak all manner of *Evil* against his *Brethren*, and that *falsly* too; of which I have given multitudes of Instances in my former *Treatises*. But to proceed: Our Saviour tells us, That *a Kingdom divided against it self is brought to Desolation*, Mat. 12. 25. *And if any Man abide not in him, he is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered, which Men gather and cast into the Fire*, John 15. 6. This, I confess, would be something to the purpose, did we by going to *Meetings* renounce our *Creed*, or turn *Apostates* from the *Christian Faith*; or were the saying our *Prayers without Book*, the same with raising a *Mutiny* and *Sedition* in *Christ's Kingdom*. In the mean time, whilst none of these things are proved, the citation of these Texts will appear to be very little to the purpose.

BESIDES, if *Uniformity* be so absolutely necessary to preserve the *Churches Peace*, as is pretended, I would fain learn a Reason, why the *Church-men* do not lye under the same *Obligations* with the *Dissenters*, to do all that possibly they can in Order to procure it? There are Thousands still living, who very well remember, how, upon the late *Revolution*, the Lower-House of *Convocation* were invited, not only by the Exhortations of *Christ* and his *Apostles* in general, but by the *King* and *Bishops* in particular, to endeavour a *nearer Union* amongst Protestants: But so sullen and averse to all *Accommodation* was the major part of that *Assembly*, that as we are assured by a Learned Prelate still living, "a formed Resolution was taken, "of consenting to no Alterations at all, in order to that U-

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" nion *. Not a *Geſture*, or a *Ceremony*, muſt be parted with, though to prevent, what they are pleaſed to call, a *Damning Schiſm*.

WE are next preſented with large and vehement *Declamations* againſt *Schiſm*, by St. *Chryſoſtom* and Mr. *Baxter*. As for the latter, he preached himſelf amongſt *Diſſenters*, which he would not have done, had he thought them guilty of ſo great a Crime: And how warmly ſoever the former expreſſed himſelf on that Head, yet, when he was *depoſed* and *baniſhed* by the Intrigues of an exaſperated *Empreſs*, and thoſe obſequious *Biſhops*, who to make their Court, and gratify their Ambition, were reſolved to ſtick at nothing; his Friends and Followers ſeparated themſelves from his Succeſſor, and ſet up their Meetings in *Conſtantinople*. Nor do I remember, that he did ever *blame* them for, or *diſſwade* them from it.

THUS have I conſidered *Divine Worſhip*, as to its *eſſential neceſſary* parts; and 'tis confeſſed by Mr. *Agate*, *That the point of* Schiſm *does not conſiſt in differing about theſe Matters*; nor can it be pretended, that the Circumſtances of *Religious Worſhip* are determined in the ſacred *Records*. But I am gravely aſked by him, *Whether we forſake the* Communion *of the* Church *becauſe ſuch* Modes *are uſed as are not ſpecified in Scripture*? If ſo, *we muſt be* Separatiſts *from all the* Churches *in the World. Where are we commanded to ſing* Pſalms *in* Meter, *or* Preach *in a* Cloak? [p. 291.] To which I reply, That I never urged theſe *Circumſtances* as the Cauſe and Reaſon of my *Diſſent*: I only argued thus, That becauſe *God* has not *particularly* required us to *Pray ſtanding* or *kneeling*, *with* or *without* a *Form*, therefore, our uſing either of theſe *indifferent Modes* cannot be a *Violation* of the Divine Command; nor does Mr. *Agate* put our *Schiſm* upon that Iſſue, but upon a pretended *Diſobedience to our Eccleſiaſtical Governours*; which ſhall be conſidered in its proper place. However, I cannot but take Notice of this Gentleman's Aſſertion, That *the Modes and Poſtures now uſed in the* Church of England, *are ſuch as* Chriſt *and his* Apoſtles *made uſe of when on the Earth* [p. 292.] I take this to be a Miſtake in Matter of Fact: In the Adminiſtration of the *Sacrament*, not *Kneeling*, but a *Table Geſture* was made uſe of by them, *Mat.* 26. 20. *Mark* 14. 18. Luke 22. 14. And tho' this may not make ſuch a poſture abſolutely neceſſary, yet it juſtifies thoſe who *follow* ſo Great an *Example*. 'Tis true, the *Apoſtles*

* *Bp.* Burnets *Reflect. on the Rights of Engl. Convocat. p.* 16.

Apoſtles kneeled down and prayed; But is there any *Diſſenter* in *England* who diſlikes that Humble Geſture? Did St. *Paul* Baptize with the ſign of the *Croſs*? Or oblige *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, to *promiſe* and *vow* what they are never able to *perform*? Could one Inſtance of this Nature be produced, it would be ſomething to the purpoſe.

I am next to conſider the *Laws of the Land*, whether our *Diſſent* be a *Violation* of them. To illuſtrate this Matter, I will crave the Readers Patience whileſt I propoſe the following Caſe: Suppoſe that I was a *Layman*, and an Inhabitant of Mr. *Agate*'s Pariſh, I demand, what it is obliges me to attend on his Miniſtry, rather than that of any other Clergyman in the City? This I deſire to be ſatisfied in, according to his own Scheme. Is it the *Law of God*? This cannot be pretended; for Parochial Bounds are not of a *divine* Original: And 'twas ſeveral Hundreds of Years before *Presbyters* had their diſtinct Cures and Titles aſſigned unto them. So that if I am under any Obligation to take him for my *Paſtor* rather than another, who is as much a Clergyman as himſelf, this ariſes from the Sanction of an *Humane Law*. Hence I argue, The ſame *Authority* which lays the Obligation, can at any time diſſolve it. And this is our Caſe. We are now left at our *Liberty*, to chooſe our own *Miniſter*, as well as our own *Phyſician*. By an Act of Parliament made 1 *W.* & *M.* 'tis ordained, that ſeveral *Statutes* therein mentioned, which did oblige us to a punctual *Uniformity*, 'ſhall not 'be conſtrued to extend to ſuch Proteſtant Diſſenters, who ſhall '*qualify* themſelves as the *Law* directs. Whence I inferred, that if theſe *Statutes* did not *extend* to us, they could not *bind* us; and where there is no *Law*, there can be no ſuch thing as a *Tranſgreſſion* of it. To this Mr. *Agate* objects, *That the* preceptive *Part*, *and* internal *Vigour of thoſe Laws relating to* Uniformity, *are ſtill in force. And that 'tis only the* Penalty *which ſhall not be conſtrued to extend to* Diſſenters [pag. 297.] Thus runs the Objection.

TO which my Anſwer is, *Ubi Lex non diſtinguit, non eſt diſtinguendum*. The Acts of Parliament expreſly ſays, That ſuch and ſuch *Statutes* ſhall not be conſtrued to *extend* unto us. Now, if the *Law* does not reach us, the *preceptive* Part cannot reach us; for, according to Mr. *Agate*'s Notion, the very Life and Eſſence of a *Law* conſiſts in its *preceptive* Part; and therefore, *one* can extend it ſelf no farther than the *other*. I know Mr. *Norris* keeps a mighty pother with his *Suarez*; as if that *Spaniſh* Jeſuite was the infallible Expounder of an *Engliſh* Statute.

tute. But in Oppoſition to what has been advanced by him, and others, on that Head, I thus argue: If the *Law* ALLOWS us to frequent *Proteſtant Diſſenting-Meetings*, it doth not oblige us to go conſtantly to *Church*; but it ALLOWS us to frequent ſuch *Meetings*, therefore, *&c.* The *Reaſon* of the Conſequence is, becauſe theſe two are abſolutely inconſiſtent with one another; 'tis impoſſible, in the Nature of the thing, that we can be *Bound* and *Free* at the ſame time; confined to one Place and Object, and yet have our choice of many. 'Tis true, my *Antagoniſt* affirms, *That the* Toleration *Act is no* Allowance [p. 63.] And that it is *very different from a* Licenſe [p. 302.] But in this he is contradicted by the *Statute* it ſelf, which contains in it the very word *Allowed*, as applied to our Aſſemblies. Or if this *Gentleman* pleaſes, I will appeal to his own *Dioceſan*, who in his *Viſitation Articles* [Tit. 4.] orders the "*Church-Wardens* to enquire, if there be any in their Pariſh "who do not reſort unto their Church or Chappel for Divine "Service, or to ſome Congregation or Aſſembly for Religious "Worſhip, ALLOW'D or permitted by the Act of Toleration. "And to execute the Law againſt ſuch as go neither to their Pa-"riſh Church, nor to any Congregation, or Aſſembly, ſo AL-"LOWED and permitted. I could wiſh that his *Lordſhip*'s Inſtructions on this Head were more fully executed, and ſuch ungodly Wretches dragged out of the Ale-Houſe, and Chimney-Corner, and conſtrained to pay that Homage to the Supreme Being, which all Reaſonable Creatures do owe unto him. However, this may ſatisfy the Reader, that our *Aſſemblies* are by *Law allowed*. I hope Mr. *Agate* will content himſelf with the Glory of publickly Inſulting his *late Dioceſan*, and that he will pay a greater Deference to his Succeſſor.

BUT 'tis demanded of me, *Whether there be no Obligation to* Church-Communion *but an Act of Parliament*? [pag. 298.] With other Queſtions of a like Nature; all which have been already anſwered, by acknowledging, that we are obliged by the *Law of God* to *adore the Supreme Majeſty*, to *honour the Son as we honour the Father*, and to *aſſemble our ſelves together for the participation of Goſpel Ordinances*: But, that this muſt be done in ſuch a particular *Place*, in ſuch a ſet *Form*, and that we muſt be under the Juriſdiction of a *Dioceſan Biſhop*, theſe things are purely owing to the *Civil Eſtabliſhment*, which has been pleaſed to give us our Liberty. 'Tis owned, that no Act of *State* can ſupercede a Divine *Command*; and when it can be proved, that we are as much obliged by *Chriſt* to live in Subjection to a *Dioceſan Biſhop*, as *Children are to obey their Pa-*

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rents [p. 299.] this Inſtance will ſignify ſomething to the Purpoſe, to which it is produced. In the mean time, a little more *Decency* towards Her Majeſty, who has Promiſed to MAINTAIN the *Toleration Act* INVIOLABLE, might have been expected from a *Paſſive Obedience Man*, than to affirm, That the *Authority of the Nation* can no more acquit us from *Schiſm*, than *excuſe us from cutting one another's Throats* [pag 302.] Which is as much as to ſay, That the QUEEN is reſolved to indulge a Crime, of an equal Enormity with *Murder* it ſelf.

'TIS urged by Mr. *Agate*, That the *Presbyterians exclaim'd againſt a Toleration, ſome* 50 *or* 60 *Years ago*; and *that therefore the Diſſenters take Things to be good or evil, according to their Occaſions* [p. 294, 296.] 'Tis poſſible, there may be *High Kirk-men* as well as *High Church-men*; but for my part, I diſlike *Heat* and *Violence* in a *Presbyterian*, or *Independent*, as much as in another Perſon. The Queſtion is, Whether the *Indulgence* we now enjoy be *juſtifiable*, and not what Perſons Sentiments have been concerning it.

TO make a true Judgment of this Matter, we ought to conſider the *Temper* of the *Age* in which theſe Men lived, and what that *Toleration* was againſt which they exclaimed. My Lord *Clarendon* tells us, 'That *Cromwel*'s Chaplains inveigh'd bit-'terly againſt the Presbyterian Government; and his Officers 'and Soldiers went up into the Pulpits *. Nay, *Cromwel* himſelf, when declaiming againſt that *Levelling Faction*, which he had a long time countenanced, in order to promote his own Deſigns, tells his *Parliament*, 'That the Ax was laid to the Root 'of the Miniſtry, and that he who was *Ordained*, had a Nulli-'ty, or Antichriſtianiſm ſtamped upon his Calling †. And in that Mongrel Aſſembly, called *Barebones* his *Parliament*, 'there 'was a Spirit of Confuſion working, to take away the *Mainte-'nance*, and the very *Office of the Miniſtry*; ſo that Tithes 'were reſolved to be *Antichriſtian*, and fit to be aboliſhed ‖. In one word; Nothing would content thoſe *Hot-headed Sectaries*, which abounded in *Cromwel*'s Army, but the Deſtruction of *Tithes*, *Univerſities*, and the *Miniſterial Function*: No wonder if this gave an Allarm to the *Presbyterians*, as well as others. For my part, I am ſo far of their mind, that I had rather there was no *Toleration* at all, than that *Schools of Learning* ſhould be deſtroyed, *Tithes* alienated, (though I am never like

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* Clar. *Hiſt. Vol.* 3. *p.* 32.

† *His Speech in the Painted Chamber*, Sept. 4. 1654.

‖ *Hiſtory of* England, *Vol.* 3. *p.* 192.

like to have any Benefit of them) and the *Pariſh Pulpits* invaded by an *Enthuſiaſtical* Cabal of *Levellers* and *Ranters*.

IF we conſider the Doctrines propagated by this wild Herd, ſome of them had the Impudence to publiſh, (as Mr. *Edwards* tells us) 'That *Jeſus Chriſt* was not very God; That we 'ſhould not look for great Matters from one Crucified at *Jeru-* 'ſalem Sixteen Hundred Years ago. Others pretended, That the 'Holy Scriptures were no better than a Ballad, and that there 'was no Reſurrection of the Body. With abundance of Stuff too horrid to be repeated *. Theſe were the *monſtrous Tenets* that the *Presbyterians* exclaimed againſt; and I appeal to all Mankind, whether it be a Reaſonable Conſequence, that becauſe they were againſt tolerating intolerable *Blaſphemies* and *Hereſies*, that therefore they muſt needs oppoſe the allowing Liberty to ſuch as are confeſſedly *Orthodox*, and cheerfully ſubſcribe all the Doctrinal *Articles* of the *Church*?

BUT to what purpoſe do we talk of a *Toleration*, when, according to this *Gentleman*, there is really no ſuch thing; for he poſitively affirms, *That our Governours have ordered all the People of this Nation, to uſe a Form of Prayer, and to kneel at the Sacrament* [p. 293.] But this Conceit is abſolutely falſe in Matter of Fact: The *Queen* and *Parliament* ſpeak to us by their Laws; and we have a Law which allows us to worſhip God without a *Liturgy*, and to uſe the ſame Poſture that *Chriſt* and his *Diſciples* did in celebrating the *Communion*.

IN my *Defence*, I cited A-bp. *Uſher*, who tells us, 'That divers 'Rites and Manners of Celebration were obſerved in divers parts 'of the Kingdom of *Ireland*. This gives great Occaſion of Triumph to my Adverſary, as he ſuppoſes, as *if we took our meaſures of Worſhip from the Wild Iriſh* [p. 304.] But how can this *Gentleman* prove, that the *Iriſh* at that time were not as much civilized as the *Engliſh*? A-bp. *Uſher* doth not find Fault with *their* different Rites and Modes of Worſhip; they were the *Pope*'s *Legates* who quarrelled with them on that account. And we may gueſs a little at this *Gentleman*'s Humour, when he takes his Meaſures of *Church Unity* from the *Pope* and his *Cardinals*.

I am now come to conſider that which is, in truth, the *Hinge* on which the whole CONTROVERSY turns, and that is, Whether we are guilty of *Schiſm*, becauſe not united to a *Diocеſan Biſhop*? For this is the very *Point* in which the *Diſpute* between

* *Gangræna*, *p.* 21, 27, 38. *Edit.* 2*d.*

us centers: And therefore, I have not swollen this Volume by Animadverting upon every Paragraph, or Sentence which I meet with in this *Author*, or by taking Notice of all his *Quibbles*, and *intemperate Sallies*, that so I might more largely insist on that in which the main Stress of the Business lies.

Mr. *Agate* confesses, *That the* Point of Schism *does not consist in differing about Matters of* Faith, *and the Essentials of* Worship [p. 289.] Nay, he does not charge us with *Schism*, *because we have not the same Modes and Adjuncts of Worship that he has*; or *because we don't use the* Surplice; or *because our Worship is* (as he terms it, p. 306. *slovenly and ill-favour'd.* He owns, *That the* Cathedrals *and* Parish-Churches *have different Rules to go by*, [p. 305.] *without being Schismaticks, because under the same Governours.* Whence it necessarily follows, that we may be Innocent, though we walk by *different Rules*; and all the Question is, Whether we *are*, or *ought* to be, in Submission to the same *Governours*? On the other Hand, this *Gentleman* affirms, *That every* Bishop *is a spiritual* SOVEREIGN; *That all* Christians *within their Territories ought to be subject to them, and acknowledge their Jurisdiction*: And that *the* Dissenters *are* Schismaticks, *because they refuse to obey their Bishops* [p. 308.] Nay, we may be in Communion with a Church by Law Established, and yet be Schismatical all the while, for want of what he calls *Apostolical Government* [page 307.] that is, *Diocesan Prelacy.* And indeed, throughout his whole *Treatise*, the Burden of his Song is this, That we *revolt* from our *Lawful Governours*, *disobey* our *Ecclesiastical Rulers*, and that this makes us *Schismaticks.*

THIS is indeed the very Foundation on which the late Mr. Arch-Deacon *Burscough* built his celebrated *Discourse of Schism.* in describing *Church-Unity*, he tells us, 'That the *Catholick* 'Church is one Political Body: That its *Government* is One, 'there being *One Episcopacy*, which every Bishop possesses (in 'a manner to me *mysterious* and *unintelligible*): That the People are also One, because they obey these their spiritual Rulers, 'and adhere unto them *. So that if we break the *Churches Unity* in any respect, 'tis by our *Noncommunion* with *Diocesan Prelacy.* Mr. *Agate* cannot deny, but that we are the same with the *Established Church* in *Faith*, and in the *Essentials of Worship.* He owns there may be *different Rules to go by*, without any Imputation of Guilt. All therefore that can be objected to us is this, That we are not *united* to a *Bishop*, whose *Headship*

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* Burscough *of Schism*, *p.* 35, 36.

over his Dioceſs is, according to this *Gentleman*, of an *Eſſential Nature* †.

BEING arraigned of *Schiſm* upon this Account, I made this Plea in our own Defence, That the Juriſdiction which *Biſhops* have over *Presbyters*, is derived from, and founded on, the *Queens Supremacy*, and the *Law of the Land:* That the ſame Law which gave the *Biſhop* his Juriſdiction, hath exempted us from it: That we cannot be Criminals on that account, for where there is no *Law*, there can be no ſuch thing as a *Tranſgreſſion* of it. This provokes my *Antagoniſt* above meaſure, and tranſports him beyond all the bounds of Decency and Truth. *This Notion* (he ſays) *is the very Dregs of that Blaſphemous Author of the* Chriſtian Rights: *That I have told the World, that I believe Religion to be only a point of State: That I am of* Hobbs's *his mind, and have the ſame Opinion with* Atheiſts *and* Deiſts, *and think the Prieſthood to be a Cheat* [p. 321.] Theſe extravagant Exclamations would have ſtartled me, had they come from any other Quarter; but conſidering the Humour of the Man with whom I have to do, and that thoſe Lines might be compoſed about the Fall of the Leaf, I was not much ſurprized at them. However, to cure this *Gentleman* of his Frenzy, I muſt avow his Accuſation to be *injurious. falſe*, and *groundleſs*; for which I have not given him the leaſt Occaſion. On the other Hand, I am moſt firmly perſwaded, that the *Goſpel Miniſtry* is an *inſtitution* of *Jeſus Chriſt:* That it is not derived *from*, nor yet depending *on*, any *Law* or *Sanction* what ever, that is purely Humane. If this *Gentleman* underſtands any thing of the Conſtitution of his own Church, he muſt know, that there is a mighty Difference between a *Biſhop*'s *Authority* to adminiſter the *Sacraments*, and perform other Holy Offices, which I own proceeds from a Divine Original, and his *Juriſdiction over Presbyters*, which is the only thing that I affirm to be Humane, as being derived from the Law of the Land.

NOR am I ſingular in this Notion; and to convince my Adverſary that I did not borrow it of the Author of the *Rights*, &c. I ſhall at preſent refer him to a Book that is very common, and that ſaw the Light ſome dozens of Years before the other was ever thought of; 'tis to *The Preſent State of England:* That which I have now before me is the 7th Edition of 1673. In that Account which is given of the *Eccleſiaſtical Government* of this Kingdom, we are told, 'That the Function of an Engliſh Biſhop

 'conſiſts

† *Reply*, p. 54.

' consists in what he acts, either by his Episcopal Order, or by
' his Episcopal Jurisdiction.

' BY his Episcopal Order, he may ordain Deacons and Priests,
' *&c.* The Jurisdiction of a Bishop is either *ordinary* or *dele-*
' *gated*; the *ordinary*, is what by the LAW of the LAND be-
' longs to each Bishop; the *delegated*, is what the KING is
' pleased to confer upon him, *&c.* Again; this JURISDIC-
' TION (we are told) is established partly by Statute Law, and
' partly by Common and Ecclesiastical Law together. And for
' the better executing this Jurisdiction, the LAW of *England*
' hath furnished the Bishops with a Power of Ecclesiastical Cen-
' sures, *&c.* The Reader is desired to take Notice, that this
Author concurs with me exactly, in deriving the *Bishops Juris-*
diction from the *Law* of the Land. This Book has been so well
received, that there have been above 20 Editions of it. Doctor
Chamberlain, who first composed it, was so far from being a
Friend to the *Dissenters*, that he treats them with as much Scur-
rility, Contempt and Scorn, as Mr. *Agate* has ever done; whilest
he speaks as Magnificently of the *Bishops* and *Clergy*, as 'tis pos-
sible for a Man to do. Now, if there be such a world of *Blas-*
phemy, *Impiety* and *Atheism* in the above-named Assertion, as is
pretended by my *Opponent*; is it not unaccountable that such a
Doctrine should pass current, for so many Years, without any
Censure? That none of our *Bishops* or *Divines* should take any
Notice of such a *pestilent Heresy*? Or that *that* must be *Deism*
in me, which passes for *Orthodox Doctrine* in another Man?

'TIS true, I quoted an *Act of Parliament*, which declares
the *King* or *Queen* to be the *Fountain of spiritual Jurisdiction*.
But if this be an improper Expression, as I think it is, he must
not quarrel with me, but with the *Statute*, which contains the
very words; and Mr. *Agate* undertakes to Vindicate and Ex-
pound them [*p.* 322.] All therefore that I am responsible for
is this Proposition, That *Bishops* receive [not their *Power* of *Bap-*
tizing, *Ordaining*, or Officiating in Holy Things, but] the
Jurisdiction over Presbyters from the *Law of the Land*. My
next Task therefore is, to prove, That this is the real Case as to
Matter of Fact, and that so much has been acknowledged by the
greatest *Dignitaries* of the *Church*, in every Age since the *Re-*
formation.

IN discoursing on these Heads, I shall at present consider the
Church of England, not as it is a Church of *Christ* in general,
but as it is the Church by *Law Establish'd*; this being that Cha-
racteristic

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* *Present State of* England, *pt.* 2. *p.* 16, 18, 20.

racteristical Mark by which it is distinguish'd, by its most *zealous Votaries*, from all other *Societies*. Under this denomination, it is extoll'd as the *best* and *purest* Church upon the Face of the Earth, and most resembling the truly *Primitive* and *Apostolical* Churches: Scarce a Writer that engages in its Defence, but describes it in such a *magnificent* and *lofty* strain as this is: For which Reason, I shall enquire, whence it is, according to the Constitution of this very Church, that a *Bishop* receives his *Jurisdiction over Presbyters*? The *Arguments* which encline me to conclude; that this *Jurisdiction* is derived from the *Law of the Land*, are these that follow.

1. THE first *Argument* which I produce to prove, that the *Jurisdiction* of a *Bishop* in the *Church of England*, is derived from the *Law of the Land*, is this, that the *Bishops* often have been, and at any time may be deprived of their *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction* by the same Law. 'Tis a Maxim agreed on by all *Lawyers* and *Civilians*, and I think disputed by none, *That no* Authority *can vacate* a Commission, *less than that which gave it*. There is the same Power required to *annihilate*, which did at first *create*. If the *Queen* gives me a Commission, no *Inferiour Magistrate* can divest me of it. If the KING of Heaven gives the *Bishop* his Jurisdiction, no *Earthly Power* whatsoever may wrest the *Crosier* out of his Hand, or pluck the *Miter* from his Head: I take this to be obvious to the meanest Capacity: Or if Mr. *Agate* expects the *Opinion* of Great and Learned Men, I may refer him to his own *Diocesan*, who affirms, and that with a great deal of Reason, 'That the Priest being, as well as the 'Civil Magistrate, the *Minister of God*, the Civil Magistrate 'cannot vacate his Commission *. Whence I humbly conceive, I may justly and modestly infer, That because the Civil Magistrate may *vacate* that Commission by which *Bishops rule* and *govern Presbyters*, therefore that Commission is not derived from God.

If we consult the *History of the Church of* England, we shall find, that, *de facto*, many *Bishops* have been actually deprived of their *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction* by the *Law of the Land*. We need look no farther back than the late King *William*'s Reign, and we shall find this Fate attending A-bp. *Sancroft*, and six other *Prelates*, for their *Noncompliance* with the *Revolution*, and refusing to give that Security, which every Government demands of such as expect Protection from it: I hinted at this in my *Defence*,

* *Sermon before the Queen*, March 8. 1708.

fence. and argued, That if the Clergy of *Somerſet* were oblig'd, by a Divine Law, to be united to Biſhop *Ken*, and he was their *Eſſential Head*, (as Mr. *Agate* calls him) 'twould follow, that no *Act of Parliament* could diſſolve the Obligation; and that he, according to his own Principles, was as much a *Schiſmatick* as thoſe he exclaims againſt, in that he concur'd with thoſe who had ſet up *Biſhop* againſt *Biſhop*, and *Altar* againſt *Altar*. To which this *Gentleman* replies, confeſſing, *that by Juriſdiction, he means that inherent Right a Biſhop has to Ordain and Govern Presbyters; and of this* (he ſays) *no Humane Power can diveſt him: That when King* William *turned Dr.* Sancrott *out of* Lambeth, *he never pretended to delete his Character. But the* INHERENT POWERS *of his* OFFICE, *were the ſame after his Deprivation as they were before* [p. 310. 312.] In oppoſition to which I would Remark:

1*ſt.* THAT this Notion is in moſt expreſs Terms *repugnant to the Statute of* 1ſt. William *and* Mary, *which Declares and Enacts*, 'That if the *Biſhops*, after 6 Months Suſpenſion, ſhall 'perſiſt in their refuſal of the *Oaths*, they ſhall be *ipſo facto* 'deprived, and are hereby judged to be deprived, of their OF-'FICES, Benefices, Dignities and Promotions Eccleſiaſtical. And if *deprived* of their OFFICES, the *Inherent Powers* of their *Office* could not poſſibly be continued to them, as this *Gentleman* vainly ſurmiſes.

2*dly*, AGAIN; This Doctrine neceſſarily involves him in the guilt of *Schiſm*, according to his own Scheme; for if *Biſhops* have an *Inherent Right to govern Presbyters*, and the *Inherent Powers* of the Nonjurant *Biſhop*'s OFFICE were the ſame after their Deprivation as before, it neceſſarily follows, that their ſubject *Presbyters* were under the ſame Obligations of *Duty* and *Obedience* after ſuch Act of State, as they were before it: For a Power of *Commanding*, always infers a duty of *Obeying*. So that he muſt be a *Schiſmatick* by his own confeſſion, when he withdrew his Obedience from Biſhop *Ken*, who had ſtill the *Inherent Power of his Office*; and transferred it to Biſhop *Kidder*, thereby ſetting up *oppoſite Biſhops* and *Altars*. But not to urge him any further with thoſe Contradictions, by which he has entangled himſelf, let us ſee what he offers that may look like a *probable* Solution of the difficulty.

TO this end, he diſtinguiſhes between a *Biſhops Juriſdiction*, and the *Exerciſe of that Juriſdiction*; and affirms, *That a Biſhop has an Inherent Right to govern Presbyters, of which no humane Power can diveſt him. But as for the Exerciſe of his*

Authority

Authority within such and such particular Districts, of this he may be divested [p. 310.] *Just as a Minister of the Gospel has an Authority to Preach, and Administer the Sacraments, by a Divine Right; but his Relation to a particular Parish, is of an Humane Institution. Hence the Union betwixt him and his Parishioners is not indissoluble; but the same Authority which fixt him there, may, for sufficient Reasons remove him, and put another in his place* [p. 311.] This is the Sum and Substance of what is offered on this Head. To which I answer:

THAT the *Abdicated Bishops* were not only restrained from the *Exercise* of their *Jurisdiction*, but absolutely divested of the very *thing* it self; which appears from hence, Because, after their Deprivation, by *Act of Parliament*, there was not one *Presbyter* subject to them: Whereas 'twas as impossible that they should have *Jurisdiction* over *Presbyters*, without some *Presbyters* subject to that *Jurisdiction*, as 'tis that I should be a *Father* without a *Child*, or a *Husband* without a *Wife*. Or I may thus argue: If Bp. *Ken* (for Instance) had a *Right* to *govern Presbyters* after his Deprivation, there must be some *Presbyters* obliged to obey him, and to be *governed* by him. But there were no *Presbyters* thus obliged, and therefore he had no such *Inherent Power*. Certainly, if any Priests in the World owed Submission to his Government, they were those of his own *Diocess*, who had sworn *Canonical Obedience* to him; but these turned *Occasional Conformists*, and revolted from him, which they can never justify, but by supposing that he received his *Jurisdiction* from the *Law of the Land*, which may revoke its own *Grants*.

NOR will the Instance Mr. *Agate* has produced, of a *Ministers retaining his spiritual Power, though turned out of his Parish*, at all relieve him; because, there is a vast Difference between a *Bishop's Jurisdiction over Presbyters*, and the *Commission* which he has received from *Jesus Christ*, to officiate in Sacred Things; which may be demonstrated from hence, That the latter continues and remains, when the former is perfectly destroyed. Thus for Instance; If Bp. *Ken* should officiate as a *Gospel Minister*, his Administrations will be esteemed *valid*, and the Child that he Baptizes will not be Rebaptized, *&c.* The Reason is, Because his Commission is derived from Heaven. But should he pretend to exert any part of his former Jurisdiction, to *Suspend*, *Deprive*, or *Excommunicate* a *Clergyman*, such an Act as this would, in its own Nature, be a meer Nullity. The Act of Parliament has annihilated his *Jurisdiction over Presbyters*,

ters, which it could not have done, had it been more than an Humane Inſtitution.

IN one word; 'Tis taken Notice of as a great Truth by my Lord of *Exon*, 'That the *Civil Magiſtrate* can't vacate that 'Commiſſion which a Prieſt receives from God. I therefore demand of Mr. *Agate*, Whether Bp. *Ken* received his Commiſſion to *govern Presbyters* from God, or from Men? If from Men, this eſtabliſhes my Scheme, and ruins his. If from God, then where are the Perſons ſubject to that Government? For 'tis ſenſeleſs and abſurd to the laſt Degree, to ſuppoſe that God ſhould give a Man Commiſſion to *govern*, and yet none be obliged to *obey*: So that it neceſſarily follows, either 1. That the deprived *Biſhops* derived their Juriſdiction from *Humane Laws*; or 2.) That God has given them a Juriſdiction over Prieſts, whileſt there are none ſubject to that Juriſdiction; or (3.) That an Act of Parliament can vacate a Divine Commiſſion; or laſtly, That the new *Biſhops* were Intruders, and all thoſe Schiſmaticks that adhered to them. Nor can Mr. *Agate* excuſe himſelf by pretending, *That he, and his Brethren in* Somerſet, *did not reject the whole Epiſcopat* [p. 315.] For as the *Long-Parliament* would have been as much guilty of *Rebellion*, had they made *Cromwel* King againſt the Right Heir, as they were in ſetting up themſelves a Common-Wealth: So the ſetting up an *oppoſite Biſhop* is as much a Schiſm, in the prevailing Notion of it, as the erecting a *Presbytery*. And the *Donatiſts* could make the ſame Plea of being united to the *Epiſcopat*, that this *Gentleman* has done.

WHEN my *Opponent* tells us, *That the Catholick Church has allowed of the Deprivation of Biſhops for a juſt Cauſe, and by a Competent Authority* [p. 313.]; he ſhould have told us, what he means by *Competent Authority*, and whether this may be applied to the *Civil Magiſtrate*. His Friends Mr *Leſl* and Mr. *Dodwel* will tell him, that it may not, and mind him of *Conſtantine*'s Oration in a Synod of *Prelates*, 'What have I to 'do, who am no Biſhop, to judge thoſe that are? Theſe Gentlemen ſuppoſe, that the *Church* muſt be governed by an *Epiſcopal Colledge*, who have Power from *Chriſt* to chaſtiſe their own Members: In the Exerciſe of which they are Independent on any *Civil Powers*. And ſo much may be ſaid in Honour of thoſe Learned Men, that their *Practice* correſponds with their *Principles*. Whereas Mr. *Agate* and his Party embrace their *Notions*, but ſhake Hands with their *Honeſty* and *Courage*; they are in truth OCCASIONAL CONFORMISTS; they ſwore *Allegiance* to one whom they accounted a *de facto King*, and

and *Canonical Obedience* to a *de facto* Biſhop: And all this in Defiance to their own darling Principles, becauſe they had OCCASION for the *Glebe* and *Tithe-Pig*.

UPON the whole; The *Nonjurant Biſhops* were not only diveſted of their *Authority* within ſuch particular Diſtricts, as made up their *quondam Dioceſſes*, but of their very *Right* to *govern Presbyters*; this appears both from the words of the *Statute*, which declares them *deprived* of their *Offices*, and from the *Reaſon* of the thing, it being impoſſible that *Biſhops* ſhould have a RIGHT to *govern Presbyters*, unleſs there are ſome *Prieſts* obliged to *recognize* and *ſubmit* to that RIGHT.

PERHAPS Mr. *Agate* will be ready to conclude, that King *William* was a *Dutchman*, and that his firſt Parliament was made up of *Whigs*, and Apoſtates from the good Old Doctrines of *Paſſive Obedience* and *Non-Reſiſtance*: To obviate ſuch an Objection, it may not be amiſs to look back upon the Reign of his Grandfather the *Royal Martyr*, to ſee whether he gave Countenance to any thing of a like Nature. Here *Hiſtory* will preſent to our view Dr. *Abbot*, who was ſuſpended from the Exerciſe of his *Archiepiſcopal Juriſdiction*, as well as Dr. *Sandcroft*; only with this remarkable Difference, K. *Charles* did that by his own *Arbitrary Nod*, which his *Grandſon* would not attempt to do without the Concurrence of *Lords* and *Commons*. The Matter of Fact was as follows: Amongſt a numerous Crowd of *Sycophants*, who endeavoured to advance themſelves by forbid Flattery, there was one Dr. *Sibthorp*, who being giddy with Ambition, and high-flown Notions of Loyalty, preached a Sermon, in which he endeavoured to prove, That the King of *England* had a Power to impoſe what *Taxes* he thought fit upon his Subjects, without Conſent of *Parliament*. This Sermon was ſent to the good *Arch-biſhop* to Licenſe it, which he generouſly refuſed to do, diſdaining to proſtitute his own Conſcience, and the Liberties of the Nation, to the Humours of a few aſpiring Courtiers. For this Refuſal, he was Sequeſtred from *his Juriſdiction*, and a Commiſſion given to 3 or 4 other *Prelates*, of a more complaiſant, malleable *Temper*, to take Cognizance of all Eccleſiaſtical Affairs and Matters, within the Province of *Canterbury* *.

Dr. *Abbot* was not the only perſon who felt the *Indignation* of the Court in that Reign; Bp. *Williams* of *Lincoln* taſted the ſame bitter Cup, being for *meer Trifles* ſuſpended from all his *Juriſdiction*; not by his *Colleagues*, according to the Rules

 preſcribed

* *Hiſtory of* England, *Vol.* 3. *p.* 50.

preſcribed by ancient *Canons*, but by the *King*'s *Commiſſioners*, the greater part of which were meer *Lay-men*. So that the Deprivation of *Biſhops* is no ſuch Peculiarity of King *William*'s Reign, as Mr. *Agate* would fain inſinuate, in order to depreciate the *Memory* of that Great PRINCE, amongſt the High-flown Bigots of the Age.

NOR will it alter the Caſe, if it ſhould be objected, That K. *Charles*'s *Biſhops* were only *Suſpended* the Execution of their Office, and not *Deprived*; for the ſame Power which *ſuſpended* them for 2 or 3 Years, might have *ſuſpended* them as long as they lived; which is the ſame thing with an abſolute *Deprivation*. The ſame Power that hinders the executing a Commiſſion, may vacate that Commiſſion. He can no more be ſaid to be a *Biſhop*, who is not ſuffered to do the Eſſential Buſineſs of his Function, than he can be called a *Juſtice of the Peace*, who is not permitted to do the Office of a *Juſtice*.

IF we look back to the Reign of Q. *Eliz.* we ſhall find, that ſhe *deprived* all the *Biſhops* that ſhe found in *England* at her acceſs to the Throne except one, for *refuſing* the *Oath of Supremacy* *. And all this by Virtue of a Commiſſion, founded on an *Act of Parliament*, and executed by meer *Lay-men*, I would willingly be informed by my *Antagoniſt*, Whether theſe Exauctorated *Popiſh Biſhops* had ſtill an *Inherent* Right to *govern Presbyters*? If ſo, where were thoſe *Presbyters* to be found who owed their *Obedience* to them? Or did they owe any *Obedience* to their *Proteſtant Succeſſors* at the ſame time? In one word, the Power which the *State* claims, totally to *diveſt* a *Biſhop* of his *Juriſdiction*, is the very Baſis on which our *Engliſh Reformation* ſtands; the Foundation on which the *Church by Law Eſtabliſhed* is built; 'tis by this Power the *popiſh Prelates* were diſcarded, and *Proteſtants* placed in their vacant Sees: Nor can the *Alterations in Religion* made by Q. *Elizabeth* be juſtified but by ſuppoſing of it. I might alſo inſtance in A-bp. *Grindal*, and perhaps ſome others. But what I have already offered on this Head, may be enough to confirm my firſt Argument, *That our* Engliſh Biſhops *derive their* Juriſdiction *from the* Law of the Land; *becauſe this* Law *often* has, *and at any time* may, *totally diveſt them of the ſaid* Juriſdiction.

2d *Arg.* I argue, in the Second Place, *That the* Juriſdiction of Biſhops over Preſbyters *is derived from the* Law, *becauſe this* Juriſdiction *is at this Day exerciſed by ſuch as are no* Biſhops, *and*

* Strypes *Hiſt. of the Reform. p.* 140, &c.

and make no Pretences at all to the Epiſcopal Character, *nor to any* Authority *over the* Inferior Clergy *but what the* Legal Eſtabliſhment *has given them.* Thus we are aſſured by no leſs a Man than the preſent Biſhop of *Sarum*, 'That *Deans*, and o-'ther exempted Perſons, do exerciſe not only the *Archidiaconal* 'but the EPISCOPAL JURISDICTION *: Nay, that they do 'ALL the Acts of *Epiſcopal Juriſdiction* †. The Author of the *Clergyman's Vade Mecum* (who writes not with the Air of a *Whig*, or a *Low-Churchman*) informs us, 'That theſe *Dignitaries* have ſometimes an *Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction* over 'Neighbouring Pariſhes ‖; and yet, before the *Reſtoration* and *Act of Uniformity*, the *Deans* were ſometimes meer *Laymen* ‡. However, though they are now in *Prieſts Orders*, yet they pretend not to an *Apoſtolical Succeſſion:* For which Reaſon their *Authority* can never flow to them in that Channel.

THE ſame thing may be affirmed of *Arch-Deacons*, 'who 'have now a Power, not only to *viſit*, but to *ſuſpend* and *excommunicate* ‡‡; Which are Parts of a Juriſdiction purely *Eccleſiaſtical*, by Mr. *Agate*'s own Conceſſion. Nor can it be ſuppoſed that they act in theſe Affairs as the Biſhops *Delegates*; nor indeed is it poſſible for a *Biſhop* to communicate the *Peculiarities* of his Office to one, that is not inveſted with the ſame Office with himſelf. A *Juſtice of the Peace* can't authorize a *Tithingman* to do thoſe Acts which are peculiar to a *Juſtice*. The ſame may be ſaid of all other *Officers*, both *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Civil*.

NAY, according to the *preſent* Conſtitution of the *Church of England*, they that can lay no Claim to an *Apoſtolical Succeſſion*, do yet exerciſe a Juriſdiction, not only over *Lay-men*, and *ordinary Prieſts*, but over *Biſhops* themſelves. Thus we are informed by a *Modern Author*, who gives us a particular Account of this matter: 'That the Deans and Chapters of *Canterbury* and *York*, during the Vacancy of either Arch-Biſhoprick, are ſtill *Guardians* of the Spiritualities of the ſeveral 'Provinces and Dioceſſes; that is, ALL the ECCLESIASTICAL 'JURISDICTION belonging to the *Arch-Biſhops*, is, in the 'Vacancy of the Sees, exerciſed by them, or their Commiſſioners. When the Biſhop of *London* preſides in *Convocation* in the Vacancy of *Canterbury*, 'tis by Commiſſion from *Dean* and *Chapter*; and as for Matters of Order, they grant a Com-

 miſſion

* *Reflections on a Book entituled*, The Rights, *&c.* of an Engliſh Convocation, *p.* 11. † Ibid. ‖ *Clergymans Vade Mecum, pt.* 1. *Edit.* 3*d*, *p.* 56. ‡ Ibid. *p.* 55. ‡‡ Ibid. *p.* 58.

'mission to some Bishops of the same Province *. 'Tis certain, the A-bp. of *Canterbury* hath a Jurisdiction over all the Bishops of his Province, which is solemnly recognized by that Oath of *Canonical Obedience*, which they all take to their Metropolitan. And yet, during the Vacancy of that See, ALL his JURISDICTION is exercised by meer *Presbyters*; and *Bishops* themselves, in some Cases, act by virtue of a Commission from them. Was it ever yet known in the World, that *Princes* would accept of a Commission from their own *Subjects*? Will the *Mayor of Exeter* take a Commission to keep Court from one of his own *Constables*? If *Jesus Christ* has given *Bishops* a *Right to govern Presbyters*, according to Mr. *Agate*'s Scheme, how came they in such a Case to act in *Subordination* to them, and by virtue of a *Commission* granted by them? How came these great Men so tamely to give up their own *Rights*, and submit to such an *Usurpation*? I see not how this can be accounted for upon a *Jure Divino* Principle: But supposing their *Authority* to flow from the *Law of the Land*, there will be no Difficulty at all in the matter.

BUT the greatest Surprize of all is, that this Jurisdiction, which is pretended to be derived from the *Apostles*, and to be a Branch of the *Episcopal Office*, is at this Day exercised in the *Church of England* by meer *Lay-men*. I mean by *Chancellours* who derive their Authority from a *Statute* made in the 37th of *Hen.* 8. c. 17. which ordains, 'That if any Man be made a 'Chancellour by the *King*, or any *Bishop* having Authority of 'to do, such *Chancellour* may lawfully execute and exercise all 'manner of Jurisdiction, commonly called *Ecclesiastical Juris-* 'diction, and all Censures and Coercions appertaining, or any 'wise belonging unto the same, albeit such Persons be LAY, 'Married or Unmarried, so that they be *Doctors* of the Civil 'Law. By virtue of this *Statute*, *Lay-Chancellours* are at this Day *Judges* in our Ecclesiastical Courts; and 'tis owned by the Author of the *Clergymans Vade Mecum* †, 'That they are per- 'mitted to exercise a Spiritual Authority. Nor can it be pretended, with any manner of Reason, that they act only as the *Bishops Delegates*; for the *Bishop* can no more *delegate* his spiritual Authority to a *Lay-man*, than Mr. *Agate* can authorize his *Sexton* to consecrate the *Eucharist*, or perform any part of the priestly Function. And the truth on't is, the *Chancellours* act independently on the *Bishop* as not deriving their Authority

* *Clergymans Vade Mecum*, *pt.* 1. *p.* 57. † Part 1. p. 249

thority from him, but from the forementioned *Statute*. Of this we have a remarkable Inſtance in the Life of Dr. *Bedell*, Biſhop of *Kilmore*: 'Twas his Misfortune to have a Knaviſh Chancellour, who made the Law ſubſervient to his own curſed Avarice, and invented a thouſand Methods to oppreſs the People, and enrich himſelf. The good *Biſhop* being grieved that ſo much Bribery and Injuſtice ſhould be tranſacted in that Court, which ſat in his Name, reſolved to do all he could, in order to redreſs that ſcandalous Abuſe; and accordingly he went and ſat in his own Courts, hearing Cauſes, and giving Sentence in his own Perſon, to the great Satisfaction of the Country. Upon this, the *Lay-Chancellour* brought an Action againſt the *Biſhop* for Invading his OFFICE; and in Concluſion, the *Biſhop* was overthrown, and condemned to pay 100 *l.* Coſt to the *Plaintiff* *. I muſt appeal to the Reader, whether this be not a Demonſtration, that the Juriſdiction at this Day exerciſed in the *Church of England* over *Presbyters*, is not derived from the *Law of the Land*; when by virtue of that *Law*, without any Pretence to a divine Inſtitution, 'tis exercifed not only by *Prieſts* but by meer *Lay-Men*.

3*d Arg.* I argue in the next place, *That the* Juriſdiction of Biſhops over Preſbyters *is derived from the* Law of the Land, *becauſe this very* Law *has* exempted *a great many Perſons and Places from all* Epiſcopal Juriſdiction *whatſoever*; which cannot poſſibly be without ſuppoſing, that both *Juriſdiction* and *Exemption* flows from the ſame Original. No *Judge*, or *Miniſter of State* whatever, can excuſe an Inhabitant of *Devon*, from the Obedience he owes to the *Juſtices* of the County. But the QUEEN, if ſhe pleaſes, may Incorporate any *Town* or *Burrough*, and put them under their own *Magiſtrates*, excluſive of all others: So in the *Church*, if the KING of *SION* has made it the Duty of all Chriſtians, to live in Subjection to the *Biſhops*, no *Humane Authority* whatſoever can diſſolve that Obligation. As to Matter of Fact, now in the *Church of England*, we are told by that great Oracle of the Law Sir *Edward Coke*, 'That 'the *King* may not only exempt any Eccleſiaſtical Perſon from 'the Juriſdiction of the Ordinary, but may grant unto him E'piſcopal Juriſdiction. And that all Religious Houſes, where'of the *King* was Founder, were exempted from Ordinary Ju'riſdiction, and were only Viſitable by the *King*'s Eccleſiaſti-

'cal

* Burnets *Life of Bp.* Bedell, *p.* 88, &c.

'cal Commiſſioners. He inſtances in the Abbots of *Abington* and *Bury*, who were by *Royal Charters* exempted from all Epiſcopal Juriſdiction.

IF it be objected, *That theſe things relate only to the Times of* Popery, if we examine the preſent Conſtitution of the Church, we are inform'd, by no leſs a Man than Biſhop *Stillingfleet*, 'That there are *Archdeaconries* in *England*, which have no 'Dependance on the *Biſhop*, but are TOTALLY EXEMPT *. 'Beſides which, there are ſeveral Donative Benefices, (as 'they are call'd) which being *exempt* from the Juriſdiction of 'the Ordinary, are *viſitable* only by the *King*, or other *Secu-'lar Patron*, who puts his *Clerk* into Poſſeſſion, by Virtue of 'an Inſtrument under his Hand and Seal, without *Inſtitution* 'or *Induction*, *Licenſe* or *Examination* by the Ordinary †. Such Pariſhes as theſe are called by the Name of EXEMPTS. Upon this Account I am deſirous to be inform'd by Mr. *Agate*, Why the ſame Law, which in divers parts of the Kingdom hath *exempted* whole Pariſhes from *Prelatical Juriſdiction*, may not as well *exempt* the *Diſſenters*? Or why *we* muſt be *Schiſmaticks* for not being united to the *Epiſcopat*, more than others who are in the ſame Circumſtances, without the Imputation of any Guilt?

4th *Arg.* I argue, in the Fourth Place, *That the* Juriſdiction of Biſhops over Preſbyters *in the* Church of England, *is derived from the* Law, *becauſe 'tis limited, reſtrained aud confined by the ſaid* Law. 'Tis certain, no Power can *limit* a Commiſſion, leſs than that which *gave* it. Can any *ſubordinate* Authority in the Kingdom, reſtrain the *Mayor* of a *Corporation* in thoſe Inſtances, in which the *Royal Charter* has left him at his *own Liberty*? Or preſcribe to him, how *often* he ſhall keep his Courts? Every one may ſee that this is not feaſible. If we examine the *Juriſdiction* of an *Engliſh Biſhop*, we ſhall find it under many *Limitations* by the *Laws* and *Cuſtoms* of the Land; of which this is a ſufficient demonſtration, That he can *viſit* his own Dioceſs but once in Three Years. Now if a *Biſhop* has an *Inherent Right* to *govern Preſbyters*, which he has received from the great *Law-giver* to his Church, I would willingly be informed, whether any *Earthly Power* can *limit* that Authority which is *derived* from the KING of *Heaven*? And whether it be not

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‡ *Vid.* Caudrey's *Caſe in* Coke's *Reports*, *pt.* 5. * *Clergy-man's Vade Mecum*, *pt.* 1. *p.* 58. † Ibid. *p.* 63.

not a *juſt* and *reaſonable* conſequence, that the *Juriſdiction* of an *Engliſh Biſhop* muſt be *derived* from that Authority, which ſets *Bounds* and *Limits* to it, and preſcribes thoſe *Rules* by which it muſt be managed?

THE *laſt Argument* which I ſhall make uſe of to prove my Aſſertion, is founded upon that *Liberty* which *Engliſh Subjects* have, *To appeal from the Sentence of any* Biſhop *or* Archbiſhop, *to the Court of* Delegates. The Commiſſioners which preſide herein, are uſually half of the *Clergy*, and half of the *Laiety*; but if the QUEEN and Lord *Chancellor* think fit, may be every one of them *Laymen*: And yet theſe very Perſons, by the 25th of *Henry* 8. c. 19. 'Have full Power and Authority given 'them, to hear, and definitively to *determine*; every ſuch Ap-'peal, with the *Cauſes* and all *Circumſtances* concerning the 'ſame. Now every Perſon knows, that *Appeals* are made from an *Inferior* to a *Superior Judicatory*; and that the laſt Reſort is to the *Higheſt Tribunal*. If *Biſhops* have received from *Heaven* a Right to *govern Preſbyters*, how can any Appeal from the *Inſtitution* of *Jeſus Chriſt* to an *Act of Parliament*? And yet this very Method of procedure is interwoven into the Conſtitution of the *Church by Law eſtabliſhed*. If *Lay-Chancellors* and *Lay-Delegates*, with the *Powers* which they exerciſe, be an Imperfection and Blemiſh in it, let theſe Gentlemen anſwer the Objection, who upon all occaſions are ready to extol it, as a *truly Primitive* and *Apoſtolical* Church. Though Mr. *Agate* may *condemn* me for an *Athieſt* or *Blaſphemer*, becauſe I relate matters of Fact, as they undeniably are; yet I promiſe my ſelf a more *Juſt* and *Equal* Treatment from all *Impartial Readers*.

TO ſatisfie Mr. *Agate*, or at leaſt thoſe that will be ſatisfied with *Evidence* and *Reaſon*, that I did not borrow my *Notions* from the Author of the *Rights*, I ſhall in the next place prove, that I have advanc'd nothing on that Head, but what has been acknowledged by our moſt eminent *Divines*, *Biſhops* and *Lawyers*, in all ſucceſſive Ages ſince the *Reformation*. My Ld. *Coke* informs us, 'That by the Statute of *Carlile*, made in 'the Reign of *Edward* the Firſt, it was declared, That the Ho-'ly Church of *Eugland* was Founded in the State of *Prelacy* 'within the Realm of *England*, by the KING and His PRO-'GENITORS *. This *Statute* may very well be ſuppoſed to ſpeak

* *Reports*, *pt.* 5. De jure Regis Eccleſ.

ſpeak the Language of *that* Law by which we are *now* Governed.

BUT to take Notice only of ſuch *Governments* as were *Proteſtant*: There is no Doubt but the *Reformation of Religion* may be dated from the Reign of K. *Edward* the Sixth, 'The 'Biſhops that lived at that time had ſpecial Clauſes in their 'Letters Patents, authorizing them to Ordain and Conſtitute '*Miniſters* and *Deacons* †. The leaſt that can be Inferred from this Inſtance is this, That as all *Goſpel Miniſters* have Originally a *Power of Ordaining* belonging to their *Order*; ſo it was the *Regal Authority* that *appropriated* Ordination to the *Biſhops*, excluſive of the *Inferior Clergy*. Though the *Power* it ſelf be derived from *Heaven*, yet the SOLE Exerciſe of that Power within this Kingdom, was a Priviledge for which they ſtood indebted to the *Crown*. This is *all* that I contend for, and the *leaſt* that can be concluded from *that* Commiſſion by which theſe *Firſt Reformers* acted.

'TIS true, the *Structure* that was raiſed by K. *Edward*, was demoliſhed by his Succeſſor Q. *Mary*; for which Reaſon I ſhall ſay nothing of her Cruel and Inauſpicious Government, but proceed to that of Q. *Elizabeth*, to whoſe Triumphant Glorious Reign the *Church of England* owes its *Eſtabliſhment*. In order to ſuppreſs *Popery*, and make way for the *Reformation*, there was an *Act of Parliament* made in the Firſt Year of Her Reign, in order to *reſtore* to the *Crown of England* its *Ancient Juriſdiction*: 'By which Statute full Power and Authority is 'granted to the *Queen*, and her *Succeſſors*, to Authorize ſuch 'perſon or perſons, being their Natural born Subjects, as they 'ſhall think meet, to *uſe*, *exerciſe* and *occupy*, under the *Queen* 'and her Succeſſors, all manner of *Juriſdictions*, *Priviledges* 'and *Preheminencies*, in any wiſe touching or concerning any 'Spiritual or any Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction, within the Realms 'of *England* and *Ireland*, &c. And to *viſit*, *reform*, *redreſs*, '*order*, *correct* and *amend* all ſuch Errors, Hereſies, Schiſms, 'Abuſes, Contempts and Enormities whatſoever, which by any 'manner of Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical Power, Authority or Ju'riſdiction. can or may Lawfully be reformed, redreſſed, or 'corrected, *&c.* By Virtute of this *Statute*, the *Queen* gave Commiſſion to ſome of her Privy-Council, and others, who deprived all the *Biſhops* in *England* of their Juriſdiction, as Enemies to that *Reformation* which was then intended, and in a little time accompliſhed. 'Tis remarkable, That *no other Qua-*

lification

† Prinn's *Unbiſhoping* Tim. *and* Titus, *p.* 86.

lification was required in these Commissioners, but that they should be the *Queens Natural-born Subjects*. If Her Majesty thought fit, they might be every one of them *Lay-men*: And yet 'tis scarce possible to find Words that are more expressive of an *entire* and *ample Jurisdiction*, in all *Ecclesiastical Affairs*, than those that are made use of on this Occasion. I appeal to all Men of Sense and Reason, whether our *First Reformers* could look upon a *Bishop's Jurisdiction* as derived from *God Almighty*, when they gave meer *Lay-men* a *Jurisdiction* over the greatest Prelates in the Kingdom, with a power to divest them of all their Authority? Nay, by these *Lay-Commissioners*, the whole *Episcopal Colledge* was actually discarded. I would willingly be resolved by my *Opponent*, who was the Churches Spiritual Head, when the *Popish Prelates* were turned out, and no *Protestants* as yet placed in their vacant Sees? For though *Barlow*, *Scory* and *Coverdale*, who were Bishops in King *Edward's* Days, made a shift to save their Lives, by taking Sanctuary in Foreign Countreys; yet they are reckoned by Mr. *Strype*, as having *no Promotion in the Church*, when the *Romish* Dons were turned a Grazing by the *Queen's* Council *. Mr. *Agate* may exclaim against these Principles as *blasphemous* and *atheistical*, or what he pleases; but after all, these are the very Principles to which the *Church of England* owes its present Establishment.

I may add, That Q. *Elizabeth* ended as she began, governing the Church by her *High-Commission-Court*; which *Court* continued to the blessed Days of A-bp. *Laud*, when he with his Partisans (who sat therein like so many *Bassas* in a *Turkish Divan*, and were as *arbitrary* and *cruel* in their Proceedings) made it *odious* and *intollerable* to the whole Nation: So that the whole Fabrick was then overthrown by *King* and *Parliament*, without any present prospect of its *Restoration*.

IN the Year 1558, I find a Bill brought into the *House of Commons*, setting forth, 'That *Edmund Bonner*, late Bishop 'of *London*, was by just Sentence, and Order of the LAW OF 'THE REALM, deprived and deposed, *&c.* †. Hence I infer, that if the Law deposes a Bishop, it also establishes and sets him up; for it cannot do one without the other.

DURING the Reign of that *Queen*, the Bishoprick of *Bristol* was held in *Commendam* for some time by the Bishop of *Glocester*, who had a Commission from A-bp. *Parker*, 'Consti-

* *Hist. of Reformation*, &c. *p.* 155. † Ibid. *p.* 65.

'tuting him Keeper of the Spirituality of the City and Dioceſs 'of *Briſtol* ‡. But this was in a little time recalled, and di-vers Commiſſions were afterwards directed from the Arch-biſhop to others, 'For the INSPECTION of that Dioceſs, particular-'ly one dated *May* 23. 1563. to *John Cottrel*, Doctor of 'Laws, to be his Commiſſary and Delegate during the Vacan-'cy ‖. Now I would fain know, Who gave this *Gentleman* a Commiſſion to Inſpect the Dioceſs of *Briſtol*, which is the ſame thing with exerciſing Epiſcopal Juriſdiction in it? He was ſo far from pretending to *Apoſtolical Succeſſion*, that he was but a *Civilian*; and therefore could not derive his *Autho-rity* from *Jeſus Chriſt*, nor indeed from any other Fountain than the *Law of the Land*. He was, 'tis true, the Arch-biſhop's *Delegate*; but if *Juriſdiction* be *eſſential* to a Biſhop, he could no more *delegate* this power to a *Lay-man*, than a power of Ordaining and Baptizing. By this the Reader may judge, what was the Management during the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*.

TO her ſucceeded K. *James* the Firſt, *March* 24th. 1602. When that Prince came to *London*, he found the *Engliſh* Bi-ſhops more Mellow and Complaiſant than the *Scotiſh* Preſby-ters, whoſe Tempers partaking perhaps a little too much of that rugged Climate in which they dwelt, did encline them to cenſure the *Actions of the Court*, ſometimes with greater Liber-ty than became them. For this or ſome other Reaſon the *King* found Means to re-eſtabliſh *Epiſcopacy* in that Kingdom. In 1606, an Act paſſed in the *Scotiſh Parliament* for the *Reſtitu-tion of the Eſtate of Biſhops* *. In 1609, another *Parliament* was held in that Kingdom; in the 6th Act of which *Parlia-ment* 'tis ſaid, 'That His Majeſty, with expreſs Advice, and 'Conſent of the *Eſtates* in *Parliament*, hath reſtored and re-'dintegrated the *Arch-biſhops* and *Biſhops* to their former Au-'thority, Dignity, Prerogatives, Priviledges and Juriſdictions 'lawfully pertaining, or which ſhall be known to pertain to 'them, ALWAYS FLOWING FROM HIS MAJESTY, as well 'as any Ordinary Juriſdiction doth, *&c* †. Here we have all the *Biſhops* in *Scotland* ſaying the ſame thing with me, and ac-knowledging, by their own *ſolemn Act* and *Deed*, their *Juriſ-diction* to flow from the *Crown*; and ſure theſe *Reverend Fa-thers* did not *borrow their Notions* from the *Author of the Rights*,

‡ Strype's *Hiſt. of the Reformation*, *p.* 245. ‖ Ibid. *p.* 246.
* Spotſwood's *Hiſt. of the Church of* Scotland, *p.* 496. † Cal-derwood's *Church Hiſt. of* Scotland, *p.* 612.

Rights, &c. as has been *falsly* and *disingenuously* alledged against me.

IN the Year 1625, King *Charles* succeeded his Father in the Government of these Realms; for whom Bp. *Laud*, who officiated at his *Coronation*, put up this *Petition*: 'Give him *Peter's Key of Discipline*, and *Paul's Doctrine* *. Now by the *Key of Discipline*, an *Authority* purely *spiritual* is always understood; and the *Authority* of which this *Prince* was thought capable, could not be of an Inferior Nature, this being directly contrary to the *Canon*, which declared him to be *Supream Governour* in all *Ecclesiastical Causes*. The least that can be inferred from the Expression is, That he was thought capable of an *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction*, paramount to any *Prelate* whatsoever. Had I Complemented King *William* in such a Strain, I should have been represented as a *Libertine*, and a *Hobbist*. But this was the Language of High-Church it self in those Days; and how it can be reconciled with *Jure Divino* Notions, this is a Mystery for Mr. *Agate* to unriddle.

IN the Reign of this *Prince*, a great Misfortune befel the good A-bp. *Abbot*, who diverting himself in the Ld. *Zouch* his Park, shot at a Buck, but the Arrow glancing against a Tree, killed the Keeper. This Accident occasioned a *Hot Dispute* amongst the *Canonists* and *Lawyers*, Whether, by this Casual Homicide, he was *incapacitated* for the Exercise of his *Metropolitical Function*? Amongst others, the *Lord-Keeper* was consulted on this Head, who gave this as his Opinion: 'My Lords 'Grace, (*says he*) upon this Accident, is by the *Common Law* 'of *England* to forfeit all his Estate to His *Majesty*, and by the '*Canon Law*, which is in Force with us, irregular *ipso facto*, 'and so Suspended from all *Ecclesiastical Function*, until he 'be again restored by his Superior, which, I take it, is the '*King's Majesty* in this Rank, and Order of *Ecclesiastical Ju*'*risdiction* †. By this the Reader may perceive, that, according to the prevailing Sense of that Age, the *Arch-bishop* himself was *dependant on the Crown* for the Exercise of his *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction*.

WHEN the *Court of Star-Chamber* had resolved to Censure Dr. *Williams*, Bishop of *Lincoln*, A-bp. *Laud* (to whose *implacable Revenge* his Prosecution was chiefly owing) pressed for the DEGRADATION of his Brother Bishop ‡. Now to *de-*

* Perrinchief's *Life of K.* Charles, *p.* 6. † Hacket's *Life of Bp.* Williams, *pt.* 1. *p.* 66. ‡ Ibid. *pt.* 2. *p.* 125.

grade, was the ſame thing as to *unbiſhop* him, or *delete* his Character. And yet in this Inſtance, we have a *High-Church Martyr* exciting a Company of meer *Lay-men* (for ſuch were the *Lords* who ſat as *Judges* in that Court) ‖ to *degrade* a confeſſed and undoubted *Prelate*. Hence I infer, if the *Kings Laws* could vacate the Commiſſion of a *Biſhop*, that Commiſſion can be derived no higher than the ſaid Laws; for (as has been offered) no *Power* can *annihilate* leſs than that which *created*: What Authority *Chriſt* has given, no *Man* can take away.

TO convince Mr. *Agate*, if poſſible, that the *King*'s *Supremacy* was advanced much higher by A-bp. *Laud* and his Faction, than ever it has been by me, I will crave the Reader's Patience whil'ſt I relate one Matter of Fact more. In the Year 1640, the *Convocation* thought fit to continue Sitting after the *Parliament* was abruptly broken up. Amongſt other things, they made the Famous *Et cætera Oath*, and thoſe *Canons* which were ſo ſeverely animadverted on in the enſuing *Parliament*. In the firſt of theſe *Canons*, when they had aſſerted, That the *Government* of the *Church* belongs in *chief to Kings*, and diſclaimed any *Independent* and *Coactive Power* whatſoever within His *Majeſty*'s Realms; they conclude with this remarkable Sanction: 'If any Parſon, Vicar, Curate, or Preacher, or any other 'Eccleſiaſtical Perſon whatſoever, any Dean, Canon, *&c.* ſhall 'in any Sermon, Lecture, or Diſputation, by Word or Wri- 'ting publickly abet or maintain any *Poſition* or *Concluſion*, in 'Oppoſition or Impeachment of the foreſaid Explication, he 'ſhall forthwith, by the power of His *Majeſty*'s Commiſſioners 'for Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical, be Excommunicated 'till he repent, 'and be Suſpended for two Years, *&c.* And if he offend a ſe- 'cond time, he ſhall be Deprived, *&c.* * To underſtand this Matter rightly, we muſt remember, that theſe *Commiſſioners* acted by virtue of the Statute made in the Firſt of Q. *Elizabeth*, that no *Qualification* was required of them, but that they ſhould be the *King's Natural-born Subjects*; and if His *Majeſty* thought fit, they might be every one of them *Lay-men*. In this Inſtance, we have all the *Biſhops* and *Dignitaries* in *England* authorizing a Company of *meer Lay-men* (ſhould the *King* commiſſion only ſuch) to Excommunicate, Suſpend and Deprive any *Eccleſiaſtical Perſon* whatſoever, who ſhould contravene the Decrees which they had made: I take this to be a Com-

plement

‖ *Ruſhworth*'s Collect. pt. 2. vol. 1. p. 416, *&c.*

* *Nalſon*'s Collect. vol. 1. p. 546, 547.

plement to the *Crown* of too High a Strain; I'm ſure, I never advanced any *Notion* ſo derogatory to the *Prieſthood*, yet I muſt be railed againſt, as joyning with the *Atheiſts* and *Libertines* of the Age, who would undermine all *Religion*. However, this is plain Matter of Fact, This was the Senſe of the *Church of England*'s Repreſentative at that Time; And our *Jure Divino* Men may Sweat 'till they melt their Greaſe, before they will be able to reconcile the *Canons* of this *Convocation*, with their own High *Fantaſtick Notions*.

ONE Story more of this Bleſſed Martyr *Laud*, and I have done, When this Gentleman was Dean of *Gloceſter*, a Fancy took him in the Head to turn the *Communion-Table* into an *Altar*. Dr. *Smith*, at that time Biſhop of the Dioceſe, oppoſed it with much Earneſtneſs, ſeriouſly proteſting, *That if ſuch Innovations were brought into that Cathedral, he would never come within its Walls any more*. Notwithſtanding this, the Dean purſued his firſt Deſign, and in deſpight of the *Biſhop's* Oppoſition, he placed the *Communion-Table* Altarwiſe, and commanded the *Choriſters* to make Obeyſance to it. This was depoſed at the *Lords* Bar by Mr. *John Langly*, at that time School-maſter in *Gloceſter* †. From this Relation I would infer, that this precious *Father* of our *Modern* High-Church, could not at that time perceive that *Inherent Right*, which *Biſhops* are pretended to receive from *Jeſus Chriſt* to *govern Preſbyters*. When he, who had but *Prieſts Orders*, refuſed *Obedience* to his *Dioceſan*, in a thing he might have complied with without any Sin.

TO King *Charles* ſucceeded his Son of the ſame Name: Amongſt other of his *good Deeds*, he reeſtabliſh'd *Prelacy* in *Scotland*; and in *Par.* 2. Seſſ. 1. Act 1. 'Tis Enacted, That 'his *Majeſty* and his Succeſſors, by Virtue of that Supremacy 'which is declared to be their Inherent Right, have a Power 'to *order* and *diſpoſe* of the External Government and Policy 'of the Church, and may ſettle, enact, and emit ſuch Con'ſtitutions, Acts, and Orders, concerning the ſaid Govern'ment, and the Perſons imployed in the ſame, and concerning 'all Eccleſiaſtical Meetings, and Matters to be propos'd and de'termin'd therein, as they in their Royal Wiſdom ſhall think 'fit *. To this Act the *Biſhops* themſelves conſented; and therefore, if the *External Government* of that *Church* be ſince altered

† Pryn's Canterbury's *Doom*, p. 75. * *Account of Proceedings in Parliam. of* Scotland, *printed* 1704. *p.* 59.

altered, they ought to *ſubmit* unto it according to their own *avowed* Principles. Theſe *Gentlemen* expreſs themſelves more fully concerning the *Royal Supremacy* than I have ever done; and I would gladly be informed, why that muſt be *Hereſy* and *Blaſphemy* in the Days of Queen ANNE, which was *Orthodox Doctrine* in the Reign of King CHARLES?

AS for the *ſhort*, but *unfortunate* Government of King *James* 2d, He ſcrew'd the Strings of his Prerogative, both in *Civil* and *Religious* Matters ſo very high, that they broke in pieces, and flew about his Ears. Omitting therefore any *Reflections* on his *unhappy* Conduct, let us conſider how *Eccleſiaſtical Affairs* have been managed here in *England* ſince the late *Revolution*.

HE muſt be a mighty ſtranger to the *Affairs* of our *Iſrael*, who hath not heard of the *differences* that aroſe in the days of King *William*, and which have continued ever ſince, between the *Biſhops* and the *Lower Houſe of Convocation*. Amongſt other things, it has been warmly debated, whether the *A-bp*, with his *Colleagues*, have a Power to adjourn the *whole Convocation* to ſuch a Day as they think fit: This Priviledge their *Lordſhips* claim. On the other hand, the Inferior *Clergy* pretend a Power to adjourn themſelves, and meet at their own times; accordingly, they have had their intermediate *Seſſions*, and Aſſembled themſelves without the *Biſhops* leave, and contrary to their good liking. The Matter in diſpute betwixt my *Antagoniſt* and me, is, whether *Biſhops* in the *Church of England* derive their *Right of governing Presbyters* from *God* or from *Men*? He affirms the *former*, and I the *latter*, and conceive it may be demonſtrated impoſſible for the *Lower Houſe of Convocation* to vindicate their own *Actions*, but by my *Principles*. If it ſhould be demanded, whether the *Father* or the *Children*, the *Maſter* or the *Servants*, have a *Right* to appoint the time of Meeting, to tranſact the Affairs of the Family! This would be looked upon as a very impertinent Queſtion. And it muſt be equally ſurprizing to every thinking Man, that *Biſhops* ſhould have a *Divine Right* to *govern* the *Inferior Clergy*, and yet have no Power to *determine* ſo ſmall a Circumſtance as *Time*; or to fix the proper *Seaſons* of Aſſembling to conſult about the concerns of the *Church*.

IN managing theſe Debates about the *Power of Adjournments*, I find the *Lower Houſe* always inſiſting upon the *common Uſage* of *Engliſh Convocations* *. Now the *common Cuſtom*

* *Hiſt. of* Engl. *Vol.* 3. *p.* 798.

ſtom of *England* is, in truth, the *common Law* of *England*; and therefore, when theſe *Gentlemen* appeal from the *Authority* and *Judgment* of the *Biſhops*, to *common Uſage*, they appeal to the *Common Law*; and by ſuch Appeal, they confeſs the *Law* to be ſuperior to the *Biſhops* Tenure; for all *Appeals* lye from an *inferior*, to a *Superior* Tribunal. On this Matter of Fact I ground the enſuing Argument: That which is the Rule and Meaſure of *Preſbyters Obedience*, muſt be alſo the Rule and Meaſure of the *Biſhop's Authority* But the *Lower Houſe of Convocation*, make the Law of the Land the Rule and Meaſure of their *Obedience*; therefore this muſt be alſo the Meaſure of the *Biſhops Authority*. I hope it will not be pretended, that an Inſtitution of *Jeſus Chriſt* may be controll'd by any Humane Law or Sanction whatſoever.

WE are told by an *Eminent Hiſtorian*, who is alſo a conſiderable *Dignitary* in the *Church*, 'That the *A-bp.* and a far 'greater part of his *Suffragans*, look'd on the Proceedings of 'the *Lower Houſe* as a *Declaration* of ſetting up for a SEPARATE Intereſt and Power, *&c* †. Mr. *Agate* has told the World in Forty Places, that we are *Schiſmaticks* becauſe we *Separate* from the *Biſhops*, and he would very much oblige us, would he let us know by what Rules, Maxims, or Diſtinctions he acquits his owns Friends of this Scandal, when attempting to ſet up a *Separate* and *Independent Power*.

LEST the *Reader* ſhould imagine that theſe *Gentlemen* have been miſrepreſented, I will ſet before his Eyes the Claim which they have made in their own Words; In a *Repreſentation* offered to the *Upper Houſe*, *June* 6. 1701. they thus expreſs themſelves, 'We of the *Lower Houſe*, being a *Diſtinct Houſe*, with 'a Power of *Diſſenting* from the Propoſals of the *Upper*, &c ‖. Nor have they abated of their Pretenſions ſince that Time: for in the Year 1705 they Aſſign this as the *Grand Cauſe* of their refuſing to concur with their *Lordſhips* in an *Addreſs* which they had drawn up to be preſented to her *Majeſty*. 'Becauſe (ſay they) the *Lower Houſe* apprehend themſelves to 'be inveſted, by the fundamental Conſtitution of an *Engliſh Synod*, with an unqueſtionable Right of DISSENTING FINALLY, from any thing propos'd to them by your *Lordſhips* for their Concurrence, without ſpecifying the Reaſons of 'ſuch *Diſſent* *. Now, if *Biſhops* according to Mr. *Agate's* Scheme, have deriv'd from God a *Right to govern Preſbyters*, it

† *Hiſt. of* Engl. *Vol.* 3. *p.* 797. ‖ Ibid. *p.* 841. * *Some Proceedings in the Convocation* A. D. 1705, *printed* 1708, *p.* 8.

it muſt be the Duty of *Presbyters* to *Obey* ſuch Governours in all *lawful Things*; But how can this conſiſt with a *Right* of *finally Diſſenting* from any Thing they ſhall propoſe? Are they *bound* and *free* at the ſame time? Are they oblig'd to *obey* with a Liberty of *diſobeying*? Light and Darkneſs may ſooner be united; the greateſt Contradictions in Nature may be more eaſily reconciled, than a *Right* of *Governing* in One; may be made to conſiſt with a *Right* of *finally Diſſenting* in the other. This makes me conclude that theſe *Gentlemen* acted upon my Principles; for if the *Juriſdiction* of *Biſhops* be derived from the *Law* of the Land, 'tis ſubject to ſuch *Reſtrictions* and *Limitations* as the ſaid *Law* preſcribes: And it may be ſtill a *Moot Caſe*, whether the Proceedings of the *Upper* or *Lower Houſe of Convocation* be more legal. But for Men to tell us that *Biſhops* have an Authority from *God* to *Rule*, and yet that their own Subjects have a *Right* to refuſe 'em their *Obedience* in Things of an indifferent and *lawful Nature*. This ſeems to me ſuch a prevaricating with *God*, the *World* and their own *Conſciences*; that I durſt not accuſe that *venerable Body* of ſo foul a Crime.

BUT not to inſiſt longer on the Diſputes between the *Two Houſes*, there is a Modern Author who gives us a particular and learned Account of the *preſent Conſtitution* of the *Eſtabliſhed Church*; by him we are informed, 'That it is the peculiar Pri-'viledge of *Engliſh Preſbyters*, that they have a Right to ſit in '*Provincial Synods*; and that they are allowed in all conclu-'ſive Acts to have a NEGATIVE on the *Biſhops**. But how can this be, if theſe latter derive their *Juriſdiction* from *Jeſus Chriſt*? Can Servants and Children claim a *Negative* on their Maſters and Parents? Can they, whoſe Duty it is to *obey*, have a *Negative* on thoſe who are *authorized* by *God himſelf* to govern? The truth on it is, the very *Conſtitution* of the *Eſtabliſhed Church*, and the whole *Management* of *Eccleſiaſtical Affairs*, is abſolutely *inconſiſtent* with thoſe *High Notions*, which have been obtruded upon the *World* with ſuch *uncharitable* Zeal and Fury by ſome Men.

MY Scheme is ſo far from being taken from that accurſed *Book*, as Mr. *Agate* calls it, *The Rights*, &c. that it was the current Doctrine in K. *Charles* his Reign. Dr. *Fulwood*, who was a Dignitary in this Dioceſs, wrote a *Treatiſe* at that time againſt *Hickeringill*, to which he gives this Title, *The Lawfulneſs of Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction*, &c. He lays down this as a Fundamental Maxim, 'That when once the *Biſhops* are legally

'Inveſted,

* *Clergymans* Vade Mecum, *pt.* 1. *p.* 142. *Edit.* 3*d.*

Inveſted, their proper Juriſdiction came into their hands BY THE LAWS, without any *Power* derived from the *Pope* *. And having enlarged on this *Topick*, at laſt he concludes, 'That the Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction being founded on the *Common Law*, *Magna Charta*, and the *Statutes*, is in the very Conſtitution of the Kingdom †. So that this *Arch-Deacon* derives the *Juriſdiction of Biſhops* from the ſame Original with me, even from the *Law of the Land*. I never heard that this Book was cenſured, or that any ſmelt *Blaſphemy* and *Atheiſm* in the Doctrine which it taught, till the appearance of my Quick-ſcented *Adverſary*, whoſe peculiar Glory it is to find Knots in Bull-ruſhes, and draw a perverſe Meaning from the moſt innocent Expreſſions.

THUS have I proved, that, according to the preſent Conſtitution of the *Church of England*, our *Engliſh Prelates* do, *de facto*, derive (not their *Power* of *adminiſtring the Sacraments*, but) their *Juriſdiction over Presbyters* from the *Law of the Land*. But, ſays Mr. *Agate*, pray *whence had St.* Ignatius *and St.* Cyprian *their Epiſcopal Juriſdiction*? *Could they derive it from the* State, *when the* Civil Magiſtrates *were all Heathen and Hoſtile*? Or, *How could the Old* Britiſh *Biſhops* Eborius *and* Reſtitutus, *derive their Authority from an Act of Parliament, before there was any Act in Being* [p. 327.] Not to inſiſt upon the very great Uncertainty of our *Britiſh* Records, and the State of Chriſtianity in this Iſland before the *Empire* became *Chriſtian*, I will anſwer this *Queſtion* at preſent, by propounding another like it, Pray whence came *Metropolitans* by their *Juriſdiction over Biſhops* in thoſe early Ages of the *Church*, of which he ſpeaks? It could not be derived from the *Civil Magiſtrates*, who were then Enemies; nor from *Jeſus Chriſt*: For according to the prevailing Scheme, *Biſhops* are *Succeſſors* to the *Apoſtles*, to whom our *Saviour* left none Superior in the Government of his Church. It therefore follows, that the *Juriſdiction* of *Metropolitans* over *Biſhops*, could be only owing to the Conſent of Churches, who generally concurred in ſuch a Model; and it may be very reaſonably concluded, that the *Juriſdiction* of *Biſhops* over *ordinary Prieſts*, was then derived from the very ſame Original; and that the One as well as the other is but an *Humane Inſtitution*.

* Fullwod *of Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction*. p. 6. † Ibid. *pag.* 12.

HOWEVER, since Mr. *Agate*, and other Modern Authors, have made so great a Noise in the World about their *Episcopat*, it may not be amiss to examine that Scheme which these *Gentlemen* have obtruded on us, that we may see whether it will hold Weight when laid in the Ballance of the *Sanctuary*, or *Sound Reason*. 'Tis alledged, *That the* Catholick Church *is one* Political Body, *or* Corporation of Christians; (which we do not deny, as being all *Subjects* to the *Prince of Peace*; but 'tis added) *That according to the Institution of* Jesus Christ, *this* Universal Church *of his must be united to, and governed by an* Episcopat, (that we may have a *French* Word for *French* Divinity) *or a* Colledge of Bishops, *that who ever causelessly separates from one Bishop, separates from the whole Colledge, and thereby disfranchises himself, and forfeits all the Priviledges of the Society, with all the Benefits of the New Covenant.* The Reader may be satisfied that this is a fair and equal Representation of the *Notion*, if he pleases to consult Mr. *Burscough* ‡, Dr. *Hicks* ‖, and others of the same Kidney. If we view this *Model* at a distance, and as 'tis gilded over with fine Rhetorical Flourishes, it may seem a very beautiful and noble Structure: But if we take a nearer Prospect of it, 'twill appear nothing else but a Castle in the Air, that has no Foundation to sustain it; a painted Bubble, which flies in pieces as soon as ever it is touch'd, as may easily be evinced by a close Examination of the Matter.

IF the *Catholick Church* is to be *governed* by an *Episcopal Colledge*, the *Bishops*, who compose this Colledge, must either act as so many *absolute* and *independent Princes* within their respective Precincts, and spiritual Jurisdictions, being accountable to none but *Jesus Christ*; or else they must *govern* the *Church* as an *Ecclesiastical Senate* or Parliament, in which the greater part have Power to *correct* the *Irregularities* of its own Members. 'Tis impossible to conceive, how they can Rule *Christ's Kingdom*, as his *Vicegerents* upon Earth, but they must act either as so many *Sovereigns*, or as so many *Members* of a Supreme *Sanhedrim*.

IF it be pretended, *That every* Bishop *is absolute and independent in his own Dioceſs*, *Episcopacy* will be so far from being a Remedy against *Schism*, which is said to be the End of its *Institution*, that it makes the Wound incurable, and leaves the Case absolutely desperate. If a *Prelate* should turn *Heretick*, and

‡ *Of Schism, p.* 29, &c. ‖ *Preface to the Christian Priesthood, pag.* 4.

and undermine the *Faith*, as *thouſands* of them have done, what *Method* can be taken in ſuch a Caſe to put a Check to the *Contagion*, and hinder others from being infected by it? Who ſhall *diveſt the Heretick* of his *ſpiritual Principality*? For, according to this Scheme, he is *Chriſt's Vicegerent*, and accountable to none but his *Supream Lord*. His *Colleagues* are his Brethren and Equals, and cannot pretend to any *Juriſdiction* over him. The Kings of *France* and *Spain*, have no Power to call a King of *England* to Account for any real or pretended *Mal-Adminiſtration*, within his own Dominions. Juſt ſo, if every *Biſhop* be *Chriſt's Repreſentative* on Earth, what has any other Perſon to do to thruſt his Sickle into his Harveſt, or to *controul* the *Exerciſe of his Authority* in his own *ſpiritual Territories*? According to this *Hypotheſis*, I ſee not but what a *Flattering Canoniſt* once ſaid of the *Roman Pontiff* may be applied to every other *Prelate*, *Though he ſhould lead Thouſands to Hell along with him, yet none may preſume to ſay unto him, What doſt thou*? To all which I may add, That this *Independent Power* in a *Biſhop*, is inconſiſtent with the preſent Conſtitution of the *Church of England*, which allows of *Appeals* from any *Biſhop's Sentence* to the *Court of Delegates*.

IF it be pretended, *That this* Colledge of Biſhops *is authorized by* Jeſus Chriſt *to govern the* Univerſal Church *as an* Eccleſiaſtical Senate, *or* Sovereign Council; *I reply*,

1. THAT had it been the Mind of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, to govern the *Church* by ſuch *ſupream* and *univerſal Officers*, 'tis very unaccountable that we ſhould not have the leaſt *Intimation* of ſuch a *Deſign* in all the *ſacred Volumes*; that there ſhould be no *peculiar Titles* given to them, by which they might be diſtinguiſhed from other Perſons; that there ſhould be no *Directions* given, no *Rules* preſcribed, for the better Management of ſo high a *Truſt*; nor any *Qualifications* required in thoſe who were to be inveſted with ſo *ſublime* a Character; that there ſhould be a *total Silence* about that *Eccleſiaſtical Polity* which is now contended for as *abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation*: This is what can never be accounted for by ſuch as believe the Sufficiency of the *Holy Scriptures*.

2. THIS *Notion* of an *Epiſcopal Colledge*, with a *Right* to *govern* the *whole Corporation* of *Chriſtians*, will unavoidably ſubject the Church of *England* to a *Foreign Juriſdiction*. For as the *major part* of the *Parliament* has the *Name* of *Parliament*, and the *Power* of enacting Laws; ſo the *Power* of Ruling the *Church*, muſt be in the *major part* of this *Colledge*, that is, in *Foreign Prelates*: For our *Engliſh Biſhops* are ſo far from being

being a Moiety, that they do not make up a Twentieth part of this *Supreme Senate*. But now this is directly contrary to the QUEEN's *Royal Supremacy*, to that *Oath* which the *Biſhops* themſelves have taken, in which they did *teſtify and declare, That no Foreign Prince, Perſon, PRELATE, State or Potentate, hath, or ought to have, any Juriſdiction, Power, Preeminence or Authority, Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical, within theſe Realms: And that they do utterly renounce and forſake all Foreign Juriſdictions*, &c. * This *Notion* is alſo contrary to the *Articles* of the *Church*, and the *Laws* of the *Land*: Theſe Conſequences do neceſſarily flow from that *Fantaſtick Scheme*, which has of late been obtruded on us. I add,

3. IN the next place, That this *Notion* is inconſiſtent with, and utterly deſtructive of, the Church of *England*, as it is a *Proteſtant Reformed Church*. I have proved in a former *Treatiſe*, That there is no ſuch thing as a *Proteſtant Biſhop* beyond the Seas who pretends to an *Apoſtolical Succeſſion*, or has any other than a *Presbyterian Ordination*: This I have evinced by the expreſs Teſtimonies of the moſt eminent *Divines* and *Lawyers* amongſt the Modern *Lutherans*. If therefore we, as parts of the *Catholick Church*, muſt be governed by this *Epiſcopal Colledge*, our *Britiſh* Biſhops will be down-voted Twenty for One: Nay, this very *Colledge* condemns them for a pack of *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks*; it thunders out its Curſes and *Anathema's* againſt them. And were their Power equal to their Bigotry and Malice, would make Bonfires of their Carcaſſes. I have called upon Mr. *Agate* once and again, to name that one Biſhop in the whole Chriſtian World, that he can joyn in Communion with out of the *Queen*'s Dominions: And I do now challenge him, and all the High-Flyers in *England*, to name me ſuch a Prelate. And I appeal to all Mankind, Whether any thing in Nature can be more *ridiculous* and *abſurd*, more *fantaſtical* and *vain*, than for Perſons to pretend to be united to the *Epiſcopal Colledge*, when in Truth they are not united to the *twentieth part* of it, but ſtand condemned by all the reſt! And the greateſt Jeſt of all is, That Dr. *Hicks* and Father *Leſly* renounce Communion with our Legally Eſtabliſhed Biſhops, confining it to two or three Abdicated Prelates; yet theſe are the Men forſooth who make ſo great a Noiſe and Bounce about this *Chimerical Epiſcopat*, that is to *govern* the *Univerſal Church*, and *damn* the *Diſſenters* for breaking that *Union* to which they themſelves can make but lame Pretences.

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* *Vid. Statute*, 1 Eliz. *c.* 1.

I could earneſtly wiſh, that Mr. *Agate*, and others of his Party, would ceaſe to lurk in *Generals*, and name thoſe Spiritual Senators who are *Chriſt's Vicegerents* upon Earth, with a *Right* to *govern* the whole Chriſtian World, and let us know in what *Regions* they inhabit. Muſt the Denomination of the *whole* be taken from the *greater part*, as is uſual in all other Caſes, and the *Catholick Church* be ruled by the major part of thoſe *Biſhops*, who are the *Members* of this *Colledge*, or indeed by 19 parts in 20? If ſo, we muſt abandon the Church of *England*, renounce its *Articles*, abhor its Communion, and go over into the Tents of the *Romaniſts*.

IF it be urged, *That the* Chriſtian Corporation *muſt be governed only by the* Sound *and* Orthodox *Part of this* Colledge; it will follow, that as the *Britiſh* Prelates are the only *Orthodox Succeſſors* to the *Apoſtles*, ſo theſe are the Men, who, as *Chriſt's Vicegerents*, have an *Authority* to Rule the *Univerſal Church Militant*. But when did they ever lay Claim to ſuch a Tranſcendent Power? Or in what Charter will they find their Commiſſions? In one Word; if this *Notion* prevails, we muſt either turn *Papiſts* our ſelves, or transform our *Prelates* into ſo many *Popes*, or *Univerſal Paſtors*. One of theſe Conſequences muſt unavoidably flow from this magnified Scheme. Theſe things tempt me to ſuſpect that this *Epiſcopat*, which Mr. *Agate* talks of, is nothing elſe but an *Imaginary Being*; an *Univerſal* that has no *Particulars*, like *Ariſtotle's Materia prima*, without any Form or Qualities; and that has no Exiſtence but in a *High-Flyer's* Brains.

'TIS true, St. *Cyprian* long ſince drop'd an odd Expreſſion, which might perhaps be a Foundation to this Airy Structure; which was to this effect, 'That there is one Epiſcopacy, of 'which a Part is held of every one in Whole †. I muſt profeſs, that though I have read that *Treatiſe* in which this Sentence is found, from the Beginning to the End, I know not how to comprehend the meaning of it; 'tis to me as *myſterious* as *Tranſubſtantiation*; and ſeems to he nothing elſe but a *good Man's Whimſey*. Whether this ariſes from the *Sublimity* of the *Doctrine*, or the *Dulneſs* of my *Capacity*, is none of my Province to determine. Dr. *Hicks* expounds the *Notion* thus, 'That in 'the Collegiate Government of the Church by *Biſhops*, *Chriſt* 'hath committed the Charge and Care of it in *whole*, as well as 'in *part*, *joyntly* as well as *ſeparately*, to all the *Biſhops* as 'his

† *Epiſcopatus unus eſt cujus a ſingulis in ſolidum pars tenetur.* Cypr. *de Unit. Eccleſ.*

' his *Vicegerents* ‡. Had this proceeded from another Quarter, it might have been condemned for *Fanatical Bombaſt*, and *unintelligible Cant* and *Jargon*: For how can they take Care of the *whole*, who are intruſted only with a *part*? Or how can that be a *Collegiate Government*, which is managed *ſeparately*? And whether Two or Three *Nonjurant Biſhops*, who have ſurvived the darling Doctrines of *Paſſive Obedience* and *Nonreſiſtance*, compoſe this *Colledge*? If not, where is that *Colledge* to be found with which he holds Communion?

I have alſo conſulted on this Head the late Reverend and Learned Mr. *Burſcough*, who eſtabliſhes his *Diſcourſe of Schiſm* on this very Bottom; concluding, if this *Notion* was capable of a Defence, *Dextra hac defenſa fuiſſet*, I might find Satisfaction in the Performance of ſo Great a *Maſter*. The Expoſition which he gives of this obſcure Text of *Cyprian*'s is this: ' There is but ' One *Epiſcopacy*, and this poſſeſſed by the *Biſhops* in ſuch a ' manner, that they are All *Legally* One, and every One of them ' *Virtually* All.

' 1. 'TIS urged in the firſt place, That all the Biſhops in ' the Univerſal Church are *Legally* One; that is, as a Colledge ' in Law is One Perſon: So they being a Colledge in the Senſe ' of the Ancients, are One alſo ‖. In Anſwer to which, I would crave Leave to Remark.

[1.] THAT a thing is ſaid to be LEGALLY thus, or thus, when it is ſo, in the *Senſe*, *Interpretation* and *Conſtruction* of the *Law*. But where is that *Law* that interprets all the *Biſhops* in the World to be One? I find not the leaſt Footſtep of ſuch a *Colledge* in all the ſacred *Scriptures*, though they *contain all things neceſſary to Salvation*, as the *Articles* of the *Eſtabliſhed Church* have rightly determined. Had there been the leaſt *Intimation* of ſuch a *Senate* in the ſacred Volumes, without doubt the Inquiſitive and Learned *Arch-Deacon* would have taken Notice of it. However, quoth this Gentleman, *they were ſo in the Senſe of the Ancients*. But pray who made the *Senſe of the Ancients* a *Law* to the *Univerſal Church*? 'Twas the *Senſe of the Ancients*, and even of this very Father, from whom this odd Conceit was taken, That *Infants* and *Children* ſhould receive the Holy Sacrament of the *Lords-Supper*! But has this Practice therefore the Sanction and Force of a *Law*? If ſo, the *Church of England* muſt be guilty of an *Unlawful Act* in Suppreſſing this *Ancient Uſage*. Will any Perſon urge, That *Common Cuſtom* is the

‡ *Preface to Chriſtian Prieſthood*, *p.* 3. ‖ *Diſc. of Schiſm*, *page* 36.

the Churches *Common Law*? I may reply, That about 200 Years ago, 'twas the *Common Custom* of Christians to worship Images, to invocate Saints and Angels, and to adore a piece of *Bread* as if it were a real *God*. Now if *Custom* makes this an Authentick *Law*, then they who first reformed those gross Abuses, not only without, but contrary to the Sense and Inclination of the *Episcopal Colledge*, must act *illegally*, and violate the Catholick *Laws* of Christianity. In one word, all Christian Prelates cannot be *Legally* One, because they are not so in the Sense and Construction of any *Law* whatsoever.

[2.] A *Colledge*, *dicitur a Colligendo*, and signifies a Body of Men collected and gathered together, in order to exert those Powers with which they are invested, and to consult proper Measures for the better managing their Affairs; but 'twas never yet known that *all*, or the *greater part* of *Christian Bishops* did meet together in one Assembly. We read of very few *Synods* for the first 300 Years, and those thin, and consisting but of few *Members*: Nay, there were more *Prelates* in a few Provinces of *Africa*, than were present at the first General Council of *Nice*, tho' there were scarce half so many at the second, which met at *Constantinople*. If we consult the present Times, there is not one Bishop now living that can pretend to be ever present at, or to have voted in such an *universal Synod*: And how can all the *Bishops* in the World be a *Colledge*, and *Legally One Person*, when they were never *collected* into *One Assembly*, nor concurred as a *Collegiate Body* in one Common Act?

[3.] ONCE more; If all *Bishops* make *one Colledge*, and all Christians must be governed by it, this Authority must be lodged in the *major part* of it; as is practised in all other *Senates* of an *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil* Nature; and this *Notion*, as has been already observed, will destroy the *Protestant Religion*, confound the Church of *England*, and subject it to a *Foreign Jurisdiction*.

THE late *Arch-Deacon*, of whom I have been discoursing, endeavours to strengthen his Position by this Argument, 'They '(*i. e.* the Bishops) all sustain the Person of Christ, and if Christ 'be not divided, neither are they *. But if this Consequence will hold Water, I may as well argue, that all Sovereign Princes *sustain the Person* of God; *I have said you are Gods, and all of you are Children of the most High*, Psal. 82. 6. Therefore all *Kings* are *Legally One*; for if *God be not divided, neither*

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* *Of Schism, p.* 36.

are they. All the *Mayors* in *England* do, in their reſpective Corporations, *ſuſtain the Perſon* of the QUEEN; therefore they are *Legally One Perſon.* The dulleſt Eye may ſee the Weakneſs of ſuch Inferences: And the truth on it is, I may as well conclude, that the whole World is to be Ruled by a *Colledge of Kings*, as the Church by a *Colledge of Biſhops*; and the one is as defenſible as the other.

THE Second Poſition which the late *Arch-Deacon* laid down to explain the *Notion* of *One Epiſcopacy*, is, *That every Biſhop is Vertually all* †. That is, he muſt have as much *Vertue*, Power and Efficacy as all others. But if this be the Caſe, there can be no Remedy applied, if a Biſhop ſhould *corrupt* the Faith, or *devour* that Flock he ought to feed. I don't ſee how any neighbouring *Synod* can claim a Power to depoſe him, or vacate his Commiſſion; he is *Chriſts Vicegerent* as much as the beſt of them. He has as much *Vertue* and Power as any, or all of them; wherefore they can have no Authority over him, for *Par in Parem non habet Poteſtatem.* Beſides, if one Biſhop be *Vertually* all, what need is there of Synods and Councils? When the Determinations of a ſingle Prelate may have the ſame *Force* and *Efficacy* within his own Precincts, as if they were the Reſults of a more Numerous Aſſembly. Nay, there is not one of the Order but, according to this *Hypotheſis*, may reverſe the Decrees of a *General Council*, or (which is much the ſame) exempt his own Subjects from any Obligation to obey them; for he, being *Vertually All*, muſt have the ſame Authority to *abrogate* a Law, that all the reſt have to *enact* it. I have been the longer in Examining this *Notion* of *One Epiſcopacy*, becauſe it is the very *Baſis* on which that celebrated Author builds his *Diſcourſe of Schiſm*; and if the *Foundation* be rotten and unſound, the *Superſtructure* totters, and tumbles to the Ground without any more ado.

'TIS true, Mr. *Agate* opens, and exclaims againſt me, *For ridiculing the moſt Awful and Sacred Unity of Chriſts Myſtical Body the Church* [Pl. Tr. p. 115.] Whileſt I have Ridiculed nothing but that Wild and Imaginary Scheme on which he lays ſo great a Streſs; I Reverence and own that *Unity* S. *Paul* takes Notice of, *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptiſm:* But as for *One Epiſcopat*, or *Colledge of Biſhops*, I find no ſuch Thing in my *Bible*, and ſee no Reaſon to make it an *Article* of my *Creed.* If this *Gentleman* thinks fit to Reſcue this *Darling Notion* from Contempt, let him plainly tell us where this *Colledge* is to be found,

† *Diſcourſe of Schiſm, p.* 37.

found, that has a *Right* to *govern* the *Universal Church*, and to which this latter ought to be united.

I come next to consider that Important Question, *Whether* Bishops *are Successors to the* Apostles, *in their* Apostolical Office *and Government of the Church*? I shall First consider the *Arguments* made use of to support this Doctrine, and then urge those *Reasons* which determine me to be of a contrary Opinion.

THE Grand Argument produced for the establishing this *Notion* is the Testimony of some *Ancient Fathers*. To save the Labour of *numerous Quotations*, I will freely own, that several of them have affirmed, *That Bishops are the Apostles Successors*. And I am ready to acknowledge, that *Prelacy* had a Being in the Church before *Popery*; for which Reason, I will not pretend to justify any who shall exclaim against all Bishops as *Limbs* of *Antichrist*, and *Brats* of the *Whore of Babylon*: And must with all Solemnity profess, that I have no Conversation with any who allow themselves in such *uncharitable Censures*. As for the Testimonies of such *Ancient Authors* as affirm, *That Bishops do succeed the Apostles*, I crave leave to make these following Remarks upon them.

1. I observe, That *Presbyters* are said to succeed the *Apostles*, as well as *Bishops*; and that by the same Authors: Nor can it be pretended, that the one succeed the *Apostles* in the *amplitude* and *fulness* of their Power, and the others only in some part of it; for there is not the least Hint of such a Distinction in the *Fathers* themselves, nor have they given Authority to our *Modern Commentators* to coin it for them. The *Fathers* who affirm this of *Presbyters*, are *Ignatius*, *Irenæus*, *Jerom*, and many others, whose Testimonies I shall produce at large, when I treat of the *Validity* of *Presbyterian Ordination*.

2. 'TIS further to be observed, That when the *Antients* found any *Institution* or *Custom* established in their Days, of whose *Original* they were ignorant, they were ready presently to conclude it *Apostolical*, and to derive it from that Fountain. Lest my *Antagonist* should object against this as a *Whimsy* of my own, I will produce the *Acknowledgment* of some of those Writers, who were most celebrated for *Learning* and *Know-*

ledge of any in the Age in which they lived. The Teſtimony of St. *Jerom* is very expreſs to this purpoſe, who, having ſpoken of divers Cuſtoms obſerved in different Parts of the World, draws this concluſion from the whole: 'Let every Province a-'bound in its own Senſe, and eſteem the Precepts of their An-'ceſtors as ſo many APOSTOLICAL LAWS *. He gives this *Rule* in relation to different Cuſtoms, when they could not poſſibly be all of them *Apoſtolical*. St. *Auſtin* lays down this Maxim: 'That which the whole Church obſerves (*ſays he*) 'which was not Inſtituted by *Councils*, but has been always 'retained, we rightly believe to have been delivered to us by 'APOSTOLICAL AUTHORITY †. And in another place he tells us, 'There are many things which the *Univerſal* 'Church obſerves, and for this very *Reaſon* we believe them 'enjoyned us by the *Apoſtles*, though they are not found in 'any written Record ‖. If therefore we read in ſome of the *Ancients*, that *Epiſcopacy* is derived from an *Apoſtolical Appointment*, all that we can infer from ſuch an Expreſſion, according to the foregoing Maxim, is, that this was the Government at that time generally prevailing in the *Church*, and that they reckoned it amongſt the *Precepts* of their *Anceſtors*.

AND therefore, I crave Leave to add this further Remark, That the *Antient Writers* of the *Church* did often give the Title of *Apoſtolical* to thoſe *Rules*, *Cuſtoms* and *Inſtitutions* which they found eſtabliſhed in their Days, of which in truth the *Apoſtles* never were the Authors. And that my *Antagoniſt* may not ſuſpect that I do tread in his Steps, and confidently affirm what I am not able to prove, I will produce ſeveral Inſtances of this Nature.

(1.) AND begin at what is commonly called *The Apoſtles Creed*. And to prevent the *groundleſs Clamours* of a *cavilling* and *peeviſh Adverſary*, who will perhaps be ready to cry out, *That I am turned* Mahometan, *or* Deiſt, I muſt take this occaſion to tell him, That I am as fully perſwaded as he can be, that the *Doctrine* contained in this *Creed* is truly *Apoſtolical*, and to be found in the Writings of divinely inſpired Men. But the Queſtion is, Whether the *Creed*, in that very Form of Words which is now received in the *Churches*, was compoſed and drawn up by the *Apoſtles*. This is what is *now* denied

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That they passed currant for many Ages, as so many *Rules* laid down by the *Apostles*, for which Reason they got the Denomination of *Apostolical*, and are cited as such by the Sixth General Council in *Trullo*. But on the contrary, were these Injunctions really *Apostolical*, they would as much oblige all Christians, as any Precept in the *New Testament*, or even as the *Ten Commandments* themselves: Whereas the *Church of England* is so far from acknowledging the Divine Authority of these *Canons*, that she makes no Scruple of a Non-compliance with them in multitudes of Instances. To give the Reader a Specimen of this Matter. The *sixth Canon* deposes a *Priest* or *Bishop* who undertakes any Secular Cares or Employments (κοσμικὰς Φροντίδας) The 19*th*, deposes a *Clergyman* who engages in Suretiship. The 17*th*, declares him uncapable of the *Priesthood*, who Marrys a Widow or a Servant Maid. And the 25*th*, permits none of the Clergy, but *Readers* and *Singers*, to Marry at all, after they have taken *Holy Orders*. The 29*th*, deposes all those *Bishops* who get their Bishopricks by the Means of *Secular Powers*; which is the Case of all our *British Bishops*. The 43*d*, deposes all those Priests who put Money to use. Every Person must see, that the *Church of England* does not Regulate her self by these *Canons*: An Argument that she looks not on them as compiled by St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, with the rest of that sacred *Colledge*. I would fain see a Reason, why *Episcopacy* must be *Apostolical*, any more than those *Canons*, which for so many Ages have been received in the Church under that Denomination? The truth on't is, when the Ancient *Canons* may be brought to bear on the *Dissenters*, they are *sacred*, *venerable*, and *extolled* to the very Skies: But when they cross the *Interest* or *Humours* of other People, they are no more regarded than an *Almanack* out of Date.

(3.) A Third *Custom* which I shall take Notice of, that prevailed among the *Ancients*, was the *Communicating of Infants*. This, as absurd as it was, was yet patronized by St. *Cyprian*, and founded on an *Apostolical Tradition*, in the Apprehension of no less a Man than St. *Austin* himself. I know the Reverend and Learned Mr. *Wall*, in his *History of Infant Baptism*, would fain put a milder Construction on the Words of this Father; I shall therefore produce the Text as it is, and the Reader may put what Comment he thinks fit upon it. 'Whence is it (*says he*) but from an Ancient, and I conceive

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'an APOSTOLICAL TRADITION, that the Churches of 'Christ hold, that without Baptism, and a Participation of 'the Lord's Table, no Man can come to the Kingdom of God, *&c.* And having produced several Texts of Scripture to justify his Doctrine, particularly that of *Jo.* 6. 53. *Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, you have no Life in you*; he concludes, 'Seeing so many Divine 'Testimonies do agree, that Salvation is not to be hoped for 'without the *Body* and *Blood* of *our Lord*, in vain it is pro-'mised to *Children* without participating of these*. I leave the Reader to compare these Passages, and then he may judge for himself, whether this Learned Father did not mistake a corrupt *Custom* of his own Age, for an *Apostolical Institution.*

(4.) The *Trine Immersion in Baptism*, or a repeated Application of Water to the baptized Person, at the naming of each Person in the sacred *Trinity*, is another Custom which has had the *pompous Title* of *Apostolical* stamp'd upon it by some Fathers of the Church. Thus when *Tertullian* gives us an Account of the *Traditionary Rites* observed in *Baptism* in his Days. Having mentioned their *renouncing the Devil and all his Works*, &c. 'And then (*says he*) we are thrice immers'd†. And *Sozomen* tells us, 'That the Heretick *Eunomius* was the 'first who durst affirm, that Holy Baptism was to be perform-'ed by one single Immersion; whereby he corrupted that *Tra-dition* which was derived from the APOSTLES, and every 'where observed ‖. As for the Church of *England*, it has now laid aside that Baptismal Rite: An Argument that it looks not upon it as an *Apostolical Institution.*

(5.) THE *Observation of a Lent-Fast* is also mentioned by several of the Ancients, as an *Institution* derived from the same sublime Original with the former. Thus St. *Jerom*, when declaiming against the *Errors* of the *Montanists*, expresses himself in these Words: 'We (*says he*) according to the *Traditi-'on* of the APOSTLES, Fast one *Lent* in a Year, they observe 'three, as if we had three *Saviours* suffered for us ‡. And *Leo* the Great tells us, 'That the *Apostolical* Institution of 'Forty Days Fast is complied with, not only by a Sparingness 'in

* August. *de Peccat. Mer. l.* 1. *c.* 24. † *Dehinc ter mergitamur. Tert. de Cor. Mil.* ‖ Soz. *Hist. Eccles. l.*6. *c.* 26. ‡ Hieron. *Ep. ad Marcel. adv. Montanum.*

'in our Diet, but by a Total Abſtinence from Vice *‖. In one Word; If we muſt *conform* our ſelves to the Sentiments of the *Fathers*, we ſhall find as much in them for the *Obſervation of Lent*, as for the *Government of the Church by Biſhops*, and *Metropolitans*; and I would fain learn a Reaſon, why their Authority muſt be more regarded in the *one*, than in the *other*?

(6.) TO what has been ſaid of *Lent*, I may ſubjoyn the *Faſting on Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*; which can pretend to an equal Antiquity with the former. *Epiphanius* tells us, 'That 'the Faſt of the 4th and 6th Day is an *Apoſtolical Conſtitution*, 'and always to be obſerved, except in the time of *Pentecoſt* †. And in another place of his Writings he aſſures us, 'That the *Apoſtles* made this Determination, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, *The Bridegroom ſhall be taken away, and then ſhall they Faſt* ‖. Though theſe Annual and Weekly *Faſts* may lay claim to *Apoſtolical* Inſtitution with as much Reaſon as *Epiſcopacy* it ſelf, yet 'tis univerſally known, that no ſuch mighty ſtreſs is laid upon them by the greateſt Admirers of Antiquity amongſt us. Should we now preſs theſe *primitive Auſterities* upon Mens Conſciences, the *plump* and *jolly Sons* of the Church would be apt to ridicule this Doctrine, as only fit for a few meagre and preciſe *Fanaticks*.

(7.) HAVING mentioned the *Faſts*, 'tis fit we ſhould take Notice alſo of the *Solemn Feſtivals* of the Church, and particularly that of *Eaſter*; concerning which, there aroſe a mighty warm Diſpute between the *Italian* and *Aſiatick* Churches. They kept this Feaſt on different *Days*, laid a mighty ſtreſs upon this Circumſtance of *Time*, and both, with a wonderful Air of Confidence, pretended *Apoſtolical Tradition* for what they did. For the underſtanding of which *Controverſy*, we muſt note, that the *Jews* did not calculate their Time as exactly as we now do by the *Motion of the Sun*; but every *Moon* was reckoned by them for a Month, of which they had in ſome Years 12, and in others 13. The firſt *New Moon* that happened after the *Vernal Equinox*, was always the firſt Month in their Year; and on the 14th Day of that *Moon* or *Month* they kept

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*‖ Leon. *Ser.* 6. *de Quadra.* † τὸ τῆς διατάξεως τῶν Ἀποστόλων, *&c.* *Epipha.* Hær. 75.

‖ *Epipha. Expoſit. Fidei Cathol. c.* 22.

kept their *Paſſover*, at which time our *Saviour* ſuffered. That which divided the *Primitive Chriſtians* was forſooth this important Queſtion, *Whether they ſhould keep their* Eaſter *the ſame Day on which the* Jewiſh Paſſover *was celebrated, tho' it fell on Monday, Tueſday,* &c. *Or whether they ſhould adjourn it to the ſucceeding* Lord's Day? Pope *Victor*, with his Party, pleaded a *Tradition* from St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* for the *latter*, whileſt *Polycrates*, with the *Aſian Clergy*, pleaded the Example of St. *John* for the *former* ‡. By this Inſtance we may ſee what little Reaſon our Brethren have to leave the Scriptures, and boaſt of *Apoſtolical Tradition*; whileſt the Churches of the Second Century were ſo divided about it, and could plead it for the Support of quite contrary Cuſtoms.

8*thly*. IN thoſe *Queſtions* and *Anſwers*, which are generally aſcribed to *Juſtin Martyr*, and bound up with his Works, it is demanded amongſt other things, why the *Chriſtians* did not bend their Knees in Prayer on the *Lords-Day*, nor from *Eaſter* to *Whitſuntide*? To which that Author makes this Reply: 'That they prayed ſtanding, in token of *Chriſt*'s Re-'ſurrection; and this Cuſtom (ſays he) took its beginning from 'the very Times of the APOSTLES *. Now, if this Poſture be really *Apoſtolical*, why doth the *Church of England* impoſe another on us, that is quite contrary to it? If it be not, why may we not be excuſed, if we think the ſame of *Epiſcopacy*, whilſt we find no mention of it in the *Apoſtolical Writings*?

9*thly*, ANOTHER Cuſtom which ſome *Ancient Fathers*, and *Councils* have, with more *zeal* than *knowledge*, declared for, is, the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*. I have already hinted at one of the pretended *Apoſtolical Canons*, which forbids Prieſts to Marry after they are in Orders; directly contrary to St. *Paul's Doctrine*; *That Marriage is honourable in all*. In the Second Council of *Carthage*, it was unanimouſly determined by all the *Prelates* that were preſent, that all *Biſhops*, *Prieſts* and *Deacons*, or any that handle the *Sacraments*, ſhould abſtain from their Wives; by which we are to underſtand, ſuch as were Married before their Ordination. The *Fathers* of the *Synod* tell us, 'They are reſolved te keep to this Rule, becauſe 'it is what the APOSTLES TAUGHT, and all Antiquity had 'obſerved

‡ Euſeb. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 5. *c.* 23, 24. Sozom. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 7. *c.* 19. * Juſtini *Qu. & Reſp.* 115.

' obſerved †. But pray where did the *Apoſtles* teach this Doctrine? We know that one of them has aſſerted the quite contrary, *That the Husband hath not Power of his own Body, but the Wife.* Had this Council told us, That the *Apoſtles* inſtituted a *Colledge of Biſhops*, to *govern* the Chriſtian World, with what an Air of Triumph and Oſtentation would ſuch a Sentence be produced? What a perverſe and ſtubborn Generation had we been, to ſhut our Eyes againſt ſo bright an Evidence? Nay, how often is the *8th Canon* inſiſted on, which anathematizes Prieſts, who ſhall erect an *Altar* againſt their *Biſhops*? But if the *Authority* of this *Synod* be good in one Inſtance, why not in another? They lay a *Yoak* on the Necks of the *Clergy*, injoin them *Abſtinence from their Wives*, pretending to derive this Doctrine from the *Apoſtles*; But ſure Mr. *Agate* who pleads for *ingratiating himſelf with the Women* ‖, will not urge this as an *Apoſtolical* Injunction. All that we deſire is, that we may have Liberty as well as he, to diſſent from *Fathers* and *Councils*, when they produce neither Scripture nor Reaſon for what they offer.

(10.) THE laſt Inſtance I ſhall produce of this Nature, is what deſerves our particular Regard, both upon the Account of its ſubject Matter, which is *Epiſcopacy*; and the Author who relates it, that is St. *Cyprian*, from whom the *Notion* of an *Epiſcopal Colledge* is borrowed. We have an *Epiſtle* of this Father's to the *People* and *Clergy* of *Spain*, who had Abdicated a couple of their *Biſhops*, for lapſing into *Idolatry* in Time of Perſecution. St. *Cyprian* commends their Zeal, and poſitively declares, ' That a People fearing *God* ought to ſe-
' parate themſelves from a Wicked Paſtor, ſeeing they have the
' principal Power of chooſing the Worthy, and refuſing the
' Unworthy. Which thing (*ſays he*) we ſee deſcending to us
' by a DIVINE AUTHORITY, that the Prieſt [or Biſhop] be
' choſen, the People being preſent, and in the view of them
' all, that ſo a fit Perſon may be approved of by publick Te-
' ſtimony *. And having cited ſome Texts of Scripture to prove

† ------*Ut quod Apoſtoli docuerunt, & ipſa ſervavit Antiquitas, nos quoq; Cuſtodiamus: Ab Univerſis Epiſcopis dictum eſt: Omnibus placet, ut Epiſcopi, Presbyteri & Diaconi, vel qui Sacramenta contrectant, Pudicitiæ Cuſtodes, etiam ab Uxoribus ſe Abſtineant.* Con. Carthag. 2. c. 2.

‖ *More Pl. Tr. p.* 11. * *Quod & ipſum Videmus de divina Auctoritate deſcendere, ut ſacerdos Plebe Præſente, ſub omnium Oculis deligatur, &c.* Cypr. Ep. 68.

prove his Assertion, he goes on. 'For which Reason, it is diligently to be held for a *Divine Tradition*, and *Apostolical Rule*, 'which is observed by *Us*, and almost all the *Provinces*, that 'Neighbouring *Bishops* should assemble amongst that People 'who are to have a *Pastor* set over them, and that the *Bishop* be 'chosen, the People being present, who have a full Knowledge 'of his *Life* and *Conversation*. This we have seen done in the 'Ordination of *Sabinus* our *Colleague*, who had the *Episcopal* 'Dignity conferred upon him (*de universæ Fraternitatis Suffragio*) by the *Suffrages* of the *whole Brotherhood* *. Here we have the Famous S. *Cyprian* positively, and in direct Terms, affirming, That the *Election* of a *Bishop* by that People he is to *govern*, is a *Divine* and *Apostolical Institution*: I would, therefore, demand of my *Antagonist*, and the rest of his *Friends*, whether they will *receive* or *reject* the Testimony of this *Father* concerning *Prelacy*? If it be *rejected*, that *Episcopal College*, which has made so great a Noise in the World, will lose its main Pillar, and the strongest Plea for *Prelacy*, which is to be found in all Antiquity, will be discarded. If his Testimony is *received*, 'twill necessarily follow, that our *English Prelates* are no *Apostolical Bishops*; for they are not chosen by their People. Their Concurrence is not demanded, nor expected, nor scarce one in all the *Dioceſs* consulted about the Matter. *Her Majesty* confers the *Honour* on whomsoever she pleases, and the *Dean* and *Chapter* are obliged to fix upon the Person she nominates. On the other Hand, the *Dissenters* choose their own *Pastor*, and thereby observe the *Apostolical Tradition*, if this Saint deserves any Credit: How can they succeed the *Apostles* in the *Government* of the *Church*, who contradict that *Rule* and *Order* of Succession which was prescribed by *God* himself?

THUS have I given a *Catalogue* of divers *Customs* disused this Day in the *Church of England*, which are yet said, by Writers of the greatest *Reputation* and *Antiquity* in the *Church*, to be of an *Apostolical Institution*. If they were not mistaken in the *Report* which they have made of these Matters, our *Brethren* can never justify their Disuse of these *Ancient Rites*; but if they were, we crave the same Liberty which they assume to themselves, of appealing from the *Testimonies* of Men to the *Oracles of God*.

* *Propter quod diligenter de Traditione divina, & Apostolica Observatione observandum est & tenendum----- Ut Episcopus deligatur Plebe Præsente, &c.* Cyp. *Ep.* 68.

I expect that Mr. *Agate* will make an Out-cry, as he has already done, *That I am against the Fathers, because they are against me.* But 'tis not a *noisy Exclamation* that will Answer an *Argument*, grounded upon *plain* Matter of Fact. I own the *Fathers* to be *competent* Witnesses of what was done and transacted in their own Days, and pay a just *Regard* and *Deference* to their *Authority* in these Cases; but as they had a great and deserved *Veneration* for the *Apostles*, so we find them ingenuously confessing, That they made it a kind of standing *Rules* amongst them, to impute such *Customs* to those divinely inspired *Authors*, as they found Established in the *Church*, and for whose *Original* they were not able to Account. I Reverence the *Memories*, and admire the *Vertues* of those *primitive Heroes*, who were *Martyrs* and *Confessors* for the Faith of *Jesus*, whilest their Writings bespeak them to be *Men*, and subject to the same *Mistakes* and *Passions* with other *Mortals*.

2. ANOTHER, and I think the *most plausible* Argument that is, or can be produced, to *prove* the *Divine Right of Episcopacy*, is taken from that General *Entertainment* it met with in the Early Ages of the *Church*. How can we suppose that *Presbyters* should tamely give up their own *Rights*, without any *Struggle* and *Opposition*? And submit to the *Jurisdiction* of *Prelates*, had it not been Founded on an *Apostolical Institution*? Or, as Mr. *Agate* argues, *How impossible is it, that the whole Christian World should conspire together to set up* Episcopacy, *without the least Contention and Noise about it* [p. 105.]? To which I reply,

1st, THAT the *History of the Church* for the first 300 Years is very *imperfect* and *defective*. There are but few of those Pieces which were composed by Christian Writers, in that Period, come safe unto our Hands; and those that we have, are, for the most part, made up of *Defences*, and *Apologies* for the *Christian Religion*, or *Disputes* against the *Absurdity* and *Folly* of the *Pagan Superstition*. 'Tis true, my *Antagonist* (with an Air of Confidence peculiar to himself) pretends, *That in the famous Churches of* Antioch, Rome, *&c. they kept Catalogues of their Bishops, and could demonstrate their Succession several Hundred Years from the* Apostles *Time, as readily as we can now the Succession of the Kings of* England [*ib.*] 'Tis as usual for some People to talk of *Demonstration* in the most *doubtful* Matters, as 'tis for *Quacks* and *Mountebanks*

to

to boaſt of their infallible *Receipts*, and never-failing *Remedies*. The truth on't is, the moſt Ancient *Hiſtorians* contradict each other in the moſt *palpable* and *groſs* manner, concerning the *Firſt Biſhops* of theſe Renowned Cities; nor are our Modern *Criticks* and *Chronologers*, whether *Proteſtant* or *Popiſh*, leſs divided about this Matter. The Succeſſion at *Rome* it ſelf, is *as Muddy as the* Tyber, as Bp. *Stillingfleet* expreſſes it. If Mr. *Agate* be ſo well ſkilled in the *Heraldry* of the Church, as he pretends, let him Name that Man who was firſt Biſhop of *Rome*, and I will undertake to *confront* him by as good Authority as any he can produce in Favour of his own *Hypotheſis*. The moſt Ancient Eccleſiaſtical *Hiſtorian* we have is *Euſebius*; when he undertakes to give us an Account of the *Apoſtolical Succeſſions*, he ingenuouſly confeſſes, 'That he was the *firſt* 'who undertook this Argument; That he went in an untrod-'den Path where there were ſcarce any Footſteps to be found, 'of ſuch as had gone before him †. Nay, after the ſtricteſt Enquiry he could make, he frankly owns, 'That 'tis no eaſy 'matter to ſay, who were thoſe *genuine Imitators* of the *A-'poſtles*, who by them were thought fit to *govern* the Chur-'ches they had planted, any farther than might be collected 'by the *Apoſtles* own Writings ‡. Now, if *Euſebius* himſelf, who lived about 1400 Years ago, who has given us thoſe very *Catalogues* of Names on which ſo great a Streſs is laid, and who mentions the Biſhoprick of *Timothy* and *Titus*, only as a vagrant Rumour or Report ‖, if this very Author profeſſes it a hard matter to find who were *Succeſſors* to the *Apoſtles*, what an Amazing Confidence is it in a *poor ſorry Scribler*, to pretend to *Demonſtration* in an Affair ſo *dubious* and *uncertain*?

2d, 'TIS to be conſidered further, that thoſe *Biſhops* who flouriſhed in the Firſt Ages of the Church, were ſo far from being *Dioceſans*, that in truth they were only *Paſtors*, or *chief Miniſters* to particular Congregations: This the Reader may ſee demonſtrated by Mr. *Baxter*, in his *Treatiſe of Epiſcopacy*, and by the Author of the *Conſtitution, Diſcipline, Unity and Worſhip of the* Church *for the firſt* 300 *Years* *. From which Books I ſhall tranſcribe nothing at preſent, but only take Notice of the Conceſſions made by 3 or 4 of the moſt Eminent Defenders of *Epiſcopacy*. The firſt which I ſhall produce

† Euſeb. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 1. *c.* 1. ‡ *Ib. l.* 3. *c.* 4. ‖ *Ibid.*

* *Part* 1. *c.* 2. *p.* 20.

is Bp. *Hall*, who acknowledges, 'That at first, all the *Presbyters* were as of the *Bishops* Family; all the *Tithes* and 'Means of the Church coming in to him, and he dispensing 'among the Priests, and other Church-Officers, to every one 'his portion *. To the same purpose speaks Dr. *Maurice*, who, though writing against Mr. *Clarkson*, with an avow'd Design to magnify the Extent of the Primitive Dioceses, is forced to confess, 'That the Name of *Altar* was appropriated to 'that of the Bishops Church, in respect of the Oblations of the 'Faithful, which were presented there ONLY, and from 'thence Distribution was made according to the Occasions of the Church ‡. Agreeable to this is the Concession of Mr. *Burscough*, who tells us, 'That in the Primitive Times the *Bishop* 'was intrusted with the *Goods* of the Church, and out of the 'Contributions which were made to him, he appointed Sub-'ordinate Officers, to supply the Wants of private Christians; 'he was also obliged to make Provision out of the same for 'his *Clergy* †. To these I may add the Famous Mr. *Dodwel*, who informs us, 'That in the Days of *Cyprian*, the Names of 'ALL such as were in Communion with the Church, were re-'cited in their *Dypticks*, or the publick Offices of the Church ‖. Now then, if *all* the publick Contributions were brought into the *Bishops* Hands, and he provided not only for the *Inferior Clergy*, but *all the* Poor of his Flock, if all the Communicants made their Oblations *only at his Altar*, and had their Names commemorated by him, I must leave the Reader to determine, whether such a *Diocess* could exceed the Bounds of a single Congregation.

3d, IF we consult the Management of Ecclesiastical Affairs in the *Cyprianick Age*, according to which *Model* the *Established Church* is pretended to conform it self, we shall find, that there were then several *Orders* of *Clergymen*, which we in *England* know nothing of; particularly, they had their *Sub-Deacons*, *Acolythists*, and *Exorcists*, &c. all which were looked upon as parts of the *Clergy*, and Men in Holy Orders, and are so esteemed at this Day in the Church of *Rome*. We find these mentioned by St. *Cyprian* ‖‡, and before him by *Cor-*

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* Hall's *Episcopacy by Divine Right*, *pt.* 2. *p.* 30. ‡ Maurice's *Defence of Diocesan Episc. p.* 38. † Burscough *of Ch. Government*, *p.* 108, &c.. ‖ Dodwel's *Dissertat.* Cyprian. 5. *Sect.* 5. ‖ Cyprian's *Ep.* 55, 76. ‖‡ *Apud* Euseb. *Hist. Eccles. l.* 6. *c.* 43.

Cornelius, in his celebrated Epiſtle to *Fabius*; and by many others in the following Centuries. Upon this Occaſion, I demand of my Adverſary, Were theſe Orders of an *Apoſtolical Inſtitution*, or were they not? If they were, why are they diſuſed in the Church of *England*? Or how can ſhe juſtify her Conduct in diſcarding of them; If they were *not*, then here we have an Inſtance, in which the Chriſtian World conſpired to ſet up divers ſorts of *Eccleſiaſtical Officers*, without any *Noiſe* and *Contention* about it; and why might not *Biſhops* be introduced into the Church as ſilently, and with as little Diſturbance as the others?

4th, BUT that which I look upon as a full *Solution* of the forementioned Difficulty, is this, that the *Metropolitans* got, in the Early Ages of the Church, the ſame *Preheminence* and *Juriſdiction* over *Ordinary Biſhops*, that they had over *Preſbyters*, and that without the leaſt Clamour or Oppoſition, that we read of. That *Arch-biſhops* are of an *Humane inſtitution*, is generally acknowledged by our *Prelatical Brethren*; and the truth on't is, the contrary Opinion is abſolutely inconſiſtent with their *beloved Scheme*: For if *Biſhops* ſucceed *Apoſtles*, they ſucceed ſuch as were the SUPREAM *Governours* of the Church under *Chriſt*, and by conſequence there can be none SUPERIOR to them by a *Divine Law*. Did Mr. *Agate* inſiſt on the *Apoſtolical* Appointment of *Metropolitans*, I might enlarge on this Head; in the mean time, I ſhall refer the Reader, who deſires Satisfaction, to *Dupin*, who treats of this Subject in Oppoſition to *de Marca* *; and he that underſtands *French* may conſult Monſ. *Baſnage*, who gives a particular Reply to all the Arguments, or rather Conjectures of Bp. *Beveridge* ‡. 'When this Office of *Metropolitan* firſt began, 'I find not, *ſays the Learned Dr.* Cave †; whoſe Judgment, in Relation to Eccleſiaſtical Antiquities, deſerves as great Regard as that of moſt Men living. However, this is beyond Diſpute, theſe Superior Officers were introduced betimes into the Church of *Chriſt*. Their Superintendency over other Prelates, is mentioned as an *Ancient Cuſtom* by the Council of *Nice* it ſelf ‖. And Dr. *Cave* ſuppoſes it might commence not long after

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* Dupin *de Antiqua Eccleſ. Diſcipl. Diſſert. Hiſt. Sect.* 6. *p.* 15. ‡ *Hiſtoire de L'Egliſe, Tom.* 1. *c.* 8, *p.* 36, &c. † *Prim. Chriſtianity, pt.* 1. *p.* 226. ‖ τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατεῖτω, *Conc.* Nic. *can.* 6.

after the *Apostolick* Age *. If we consult the Nature of that *Jurisdiction* which was exercised by *Metropolitans* over other *Bishops*, 'twill be found every Way as extensive as that which they themselves had over *Ordinary Priests*. For Instance; if a Person was ordained a *Bishop* without the Consent of his *Metropolitan*, he was pronounced, by the most Ancient *Canons* of the Church, to be *No Bishop* ‡. He had Power to *receive Appeals* from other *Bishops* †; and by consequence to reverse the Sentences pronounced by them, if he judged them inconsistent with Equity and Reason. In one Word, the *Metropolitan* took Care of the *whole Province* ‡; he summoned *Synods*, and presided in them, nor were *Bishops* permitted to Travel beyond the Seas without *his License*, and *Letter Recommendatory* ‖. I have hinted at these Things, to let the Reader see, that tho' there be no *Divine Appointment* which gives *Arch-bishops* a *Jurisdiction* over *Bishops*, (our Adversaries themselves being Judges) yet, *de facto*, they did, in the Early Ages of the Church, obtain it, without any *Clamour* or *Contention*; nor do we read of the least *Opposition* made to the Exercise of this Claim by those whose *Rights* and *Prerogatives* were thereby lessened and surrendred up. Why might not the Christian World as well conspire to set up *Episcopacy*, as we know it actually did to establish a *Metropolitical Power*? And that with as little Noise, In one Word; if Mr. *Agate* will inform me of the Time *when*, and Manner *how*, the *Metropolitans* got a *Jurisdiction* over other *Bishops*, I will engage to be as punctual and exact in Relation to that Authority which these have obtained over *Ordinary Priests*. I am confident our *High-Flyers* don't love His Grace of *Canterbury* so well, as to allow him a *Divine*, and by consequence an *Uncontroulable* Commission to govern all the Clergy of his *Province*: And I may defy all Mankind to give a tolerable Reason, why the whole of our *Hierarchy* may not be an *Humane Constitution*, as well as the principal Part of it?

THUS have I examined the Pretences commonly made use of, to prove the *Succession of Bishops* to the *Apostolical Office*. I come next to give the *Reason of my Dissent from that prevailing Notion*, which is grounded on the Nature of an *Office*: *An Office in general, is an Authority and Obligation to do such*

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* *Disc. of Ancient* Church *Government*, *p.* 92. ‡ *Conc:* Nic. *can:* 6. *Conc:* Antioch. *can:* 19. † *Conc:* Sard. *can:* 14. ‡ *Conc:* Antioch. *can:* 9. ‖ *Conc.* Carthag. 3. *can:* 28.

such and such Work and Business. Thus for Instance, He that that hath *Authority* to issue out his Warrants, to commit Malefactors to Prison, to hold Sessions, and the like, has the *Office* of a *Justice of Peace*; he that has a *Commission* to Lead, Command and Muster a Company of Men, has the *Office* of a *Captain*; he that has *Authority* to consecrate the *Eucharist*, to Preach, and Baptize Infants, has the *Office* of a *Priest*. So that to understand the *Office* of the *Apostles*, we must consider the Nature and Extent of that *Authority* with which they were Invested. This we find to be universal over all Christians; both Clergy and Laity were obliged to yield Obedience to those divinely-inspired Persons. Were St. *Paul* now alive, I hope there is never a Prelate in *England* would dispute his Authority, or refuse him his Submission. 'Tis pretended, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were real *Bishops*; and yet we find that the *Apostles* did command, charge and injoyn them to do so and so, that he did prescribe them Rules which they were obliged to observe, That he sent them here and there, and summoned them to attend his *Motions*; acting in all these Instances as a *Governour* or *Ruler*. Now if *Bishops* have not the same Authority, they cannot pretend to the same *Office*. Or my Argument may be thus formed: The *Offices* of *Governours* and *Governed* are distinct *Offices*; but the *Offices* of *Apostles* and *Bishops* are the *Offices* of *Governours* and *Governed*; therefore they are distinct *Offices*.

BY this time I hope the Reader may be satisfied, that there is neither *Heresy* nor *Blasphemy* in my Assertion, That Bishops derive their *Jurisdiction over Presbyters from the Law of the Land*. And 'tis a Surprize to me, that this should be questioned by any Person, when by the Laws of the Established Church our *Chancellors* and *Delegates*, who may be meer *Laymen*, are yet Invested with an Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction independent on, and paramount unto the *Bishops* themselves. If it be objected, That this is an Encroachment of the *State* upon the Priviledges of the *Church*; my Answer is, That K. *William*, upon his Access to the Throne, summoned a *Convocation* of the *Clergy*, giving them a Commission under the Great Seal of *England*, to consult, amongst other things, of proper Methods *for the Reformation of Ecclesiastical Courts* *. On the other Hand, Dr. *Jane*, *Prolocutor* of the *Lower House*, when delivering the Sense of himself and Brethren to the Bishops, 'Extolled the Excellency of the Church of *England* as

'Established

* *Hist: of* England, *Vol:* 3. *p.* 553. 4. Ibid. *p.* 552.

'Eſtabliſhed by Law above all Chriſtian Communities; and 'implied that it wanted no Amendments. Concluding with this triumphant Reſolution, *Nolumus Leges* Angliæ *mutari*, We will not have the Laws of *England* changed †. I demand therefore, whether the *Juriſdiction* exerciſed by *Laymen*, be a *Fault* and *Error* in the Conſtitution of our Church, or no? If it be, then it muſt be laid at the Doors of the *Lower Houſe of Convocation*, who had an Opportunity and Invitation to redreſs this Grievance, and yet peremptorily refuſed to do it; and it will be a Queſtion, whether the Church deſerves thoſe *pompous* Characters of *Primitive* and *Apoſtolical*, with which 'tis uſually larded over. But if this be no *Bleminſh* in our Conſtitution, why muſt it be *Blaſphemy* and *Atheiſm* in me, to ſuppoſe that the *Law* gives a *Juriſdiction* over *Presbyters* to Men in *Holy Orders*, when the ſame Law gives much more than I contend for to meer *Laymen*.

THE next Poſt I undertook to defend, is, *The Validity of* Preſbyterian *Ordination:* This I ſhall attempt both from Scripture and Antiquity; and the Precedency being due to the former, I ſhall begin my *Defence* with an Argument taken from the ſacred Records.

IF *Preſbyters* in Scripture times did inveſt Perſons with the Miniſterial Office by the *Impoſition of Hands*, then they had a *Power of Ordaining*; but *Preſbyters* in Scripture times did thus inveſt Perſons with the *Miniſterial Office*, therefore, *&c.* The Conſequence is too plain to be denied, the *Inveſting* Perſons in ſuch an *Office* being all that we underſtand by *Ordination*. The *Minor* I prove from that celebrated Text, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Propheſy, with the laying on of the Hands of the* PRESBYTERY. To confirm the Argument drawn from this Text, I ſhall prove, (1.) That by *Presbytery* we are to underſtand a *Company* of Perſons called *Presbyters*. (2.) That theſe *Preſbyters*, of which the *New Teſtament* makes mention, neither were, nor could be *Biſhops*, in the Modern Acceptation of the Word. And (3. that by *Gift* we are to underſtand the *Miniſterial Gift* Authority or Office. Theſe things being cleared, *Presbyterian Ordination* will appear agreeable to *Scripture Rules*, though it may be condemned by ſubſequent *Church Canons*.

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† *Hiſt. of* England, *Vol.* 3. *p.* 552.

1. BY the word *Presbytery*, we are to understand a Company of Persons called Presbyters. The Greek Word Πρεσβυτέριον (from whence the English Word *Presbytery* is derived) is to be found in two other places of the *New Testament*. *Luke* 22. 66. where we read of the *Elders of the People*; but in the Original 'tis the *Presbytery of the People*. So *Acts* 22. 5. our Translators render it, the *Estate of the Elders*. In both which places it necessarily signifies an *Assembly* of such Officers as in the *Jewish* Church were called *Elders* or *Presbyters*. And from them the *Christian* Church borrowed this Term, as it did a great many others, to denote those Persons who under the *Gospel Dispensation* were to officiate in sacred things. If we consult other Authors who have written since the *Canon* of Sacred Scripture was compleat, we shall find that this Word is taken in the same Sense; of which multitudes of Instances might be easily produced. But the Reader who desires further Satisfaction, may have recourse to the Learned *Blondel*, who produces *numerous Quotations*, from *Fathers* and *Councils*, both of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church to this purpose *.

2. BUT the main Question is, *What those Officers were which in the New Testament go under the Denomination of Presbyters*? And my next Province is to prove, That they neither were nor could be *Diocesan Bishops*. However, the Reader is desired to take Notice, that the Word which in our *English* Bibles is translated *Elders*, is in the *Greek Presbyters*, and I, in my *Quotations*, have followed the Original. These things premised,

[1.] I argue in the First Place, That the Persons called *Presbyters* in the *New Testament* were not *Diocesan Bishops*, because there were many of them in *one* and the *same Church* or *City*; which is absolutely inconsistent with the *Prelatical Scheme*, which allows but of *one Bishop* IN *one City*. When *Paul* and *Barnabas* went up and down the *Lesser Asia*, propagating the *Gospel*, confirming the *Disciples*, and proclaiming the *glad Tidings of Salvation* where so e're they came, we have this Account of their Proceedings, *That they Ordained them* Presbyters *in every Church*, Acts 14. 23. Not a *Prelate* to *govern* several Churches, but a *Company of Presbyters* to

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* Blondel's *Apolog.* 1. 89.

manage the Affairs of each individual Church. Thus we read of ſeveral *Preſbyters* in the Church of *Jeruſalem*, *Acts* 15. 4. And of the *Preſbyters* of the Church of *Epheſus*, who were ſummoned by St. *Paul* to attend him at *Miletus*, *Acts* 20. 17. to whom he made a moſt Affectionate *Diſcourſe* concerning the *Duties* of their *Function*. To all which I ſhall ſubjoin that celebrated *Text* ſo much inſiſted on by our *Epiſcopal Brethren*, *Tit.* 1. 5. *For this Cauſe* (ſays St. *Paul* to *Titus*) *left I thee in* Crete, *that thou ſhouldeſt ſet in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain* Preſbyters *in every City, as I had appointed thee.* We no where read of a particular *Preſbyter* governing many *Churches*; but we have many Inſtances of a *Company* or *Colledge of Preſbyters* belonging to the ſame individual *Church* or *City*. Whence I infer, that *Scripture Preſbyters* could not be *Dioceſan Biſhops*; two *Prelates* in the ſame Church being *now* looked upon as *Monſtrous*, as two *Suns* in the ſame Firmament, or two *Sovereign Princes* in one and the ſame State.

[2.] I argue in the next place, That the *Scripture Presbyters* were not *Dioceſan Biſhops*, becauſe they ſtood related only to one particular *Church* or *Congregation*, and could take the Charge of no more. This I prove from the Epiſtle of St. *James*, c. 5. v. 14. *Is any Sick among you? Let him call for the* Preſbyters *of the Church, and let them pray over him*, &c. Hence I argue, If it be the Duty of Sick Perſons to *ſend* for the *Preſbyters* of the Church, 'tis their Duty to *come* when ſent for, to pray with and for the Languiſhing Patient, adminiſtring ſuch Advice and Counſel to him as may be ſuitable to his preſent Circumſtances. Now every One ſees, that this is abſolutely *impoſſible* to be done in a *Dioceſs*, conſiſting of many Pariſhes. Can our *Biſhops* Viſit all the Sick in their reſpective precincts? This is Impracticable in the very Nature of the Thing, for which Reaſon the *New Teſtament Preſbyters* could not be *Biſhops* in the preſent Acceptation of the Word; and by conſequence, the *Preſbytery* impoſing Hands on *Timothy* was an Aſſembly of *Preſbyters*, not of *Eccleſiaſticks* poſſeſſing an Higher Dignity in the Church.

[3.] THE next thing I undertook to prove, is, That theſe Perſons did, by this ſolemn Rite or Ceremony, confer on *Timothy* the *Miniſterial Gift*, *Authority*, or *Office*, which is the very ſame thing with *Ordination*. 'Tis evident, beyond all Diſpute, that *Timothy* did, with the *Impoſition* of theſe *Mens Hands*,

Hands, receive a *Gift*, which he was called upon to *excite* and *ſtir* up. 'Tis confeſſed, that we find mention made of two ſorts of *Gifts* in the Holy Scriptures, ſome *extraordinary*, and others *ordinary*. Of the firſt ſort were the *Gifts of Healing*, of *working Miracles*, of *Propheſie*, *divers kinds of Tongues*, and the like, 1 *Cor.* 12. 9, *&c.* Thus 'tis recorded of the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel, That God did *bear them witneſs*, *both with Signs and Wonders*, *and with divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, Heb. 2. 4. enabling them to confirm the Doctrine which they taught, by *numerous* and *uncontroled Miracles*. But as theſe *Gifts* were only neceſſary for the firſt planting of the *Goſpel*, ſo there has been a Ceſſation of them for many Ages in the Chriſtian Church. There be other *Gifts* of an Ordinary Standing Nature in the Church; thus we read of the *Gifts* of *Miniſtry*, of *Teaching* and *Exhortation*, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7. Theſe ſuppoſe the *Miniſterial Office* to be of a perpetual Duration, and to continue as long as Chriſtianity has a Being.

IF it be demanded, what *Gift* it was that *Timothy* is ſaid to receive in this celebrated Text? I will not deny but he might have the *Gift* of *Tongues*, to ſpeak thoſe *Languages* he never ſtudied, or of working other *Miracles*; but this could not be the *Gift* which he received with the *Laying on the hands of the Presbytery*: My reaſon is this, becauſe the *conferring* this Miraculous *Gift*, was the peculiar Province of the *Apoſtles*. This is evident to any Perſon who conſults the Eighth Chapter of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, in which we read, that when *Philip* preach'd the *Goſpel* at *Samaria*, and confirm'd his *Doctrine* by *aſtoniſhing Signs* and *Wonders*, great Multitudes of People were prevailed upon to embrace the *Chriſtian Faith*. Now when the *Apoſtles* which were at *Jeruſalem* heard that *Samaria* had received the *Word of God*, they ſent to them *Peter* and *John*, v. 14. who when they came down *laid their Hands on them* and *they received the Holy Ghoſt*, v. 17. *i. e.* the *Gift* of working *Miracles*, ſpeaking with *Tongues*, &c. as Dr. *Hammond* paraphraſes on the Words. *Philip* could himſelf work *Miracles*; but not being of the *Apoſtolical Order*, he could not confer this extraordinary *Gift* on others; ſo that it is expreſly affirm'd, that the *Holy Ghoſt* was given through the *laying on* of the APOSTLES HANDS, *v.* 18. Nor do we read that this Priviledge was communicated to any other Perſons. Whence the Reverend and Learned Dr. *Whitby* remarks, that the *Holy Ghoſt* was never thus conferr'd, but by the Hands of

an *Apoſtle* *. And therefore when *Simon Magus* was inſtigated by his own *ſordid Ambition*, to attempt the purchaſing this extraordinary *Gift*, he did not addreſs himſelf to *Philip*, or any *Ordinary Paſtors* of the *Church*, but to *Peter* and *John* who had power to confer it. Thus when St. *Paul* laid his Hands on the *Diſciples* at *Epheſus*, the *Holy Ghoſt came upon them*, and (as the conſequence of this) *they ſpake with Tongues and Propheſied*. Acts 19. 6. And ſeveral other Inſtances of the like Nature might be produced, in which the *Holy Ghoſt*, in its *miraculous Influences*, is ſaid to be communicated by the *Apoſtles*. But this was their peculiar privilege; Nor do we find any others making the leaſt pretences to it. Whence I infer, that the *Gift* which *Timothy* receiv'd with the *laying on the Hands of the Preſbytery*, was not any extraordinary Miraculous *Gift*. But the *Miniſterial Gift*, *Authority* or *Office*.

THAT this is the true intent and meaning of this famous Text, is further evident by the whole ſcope and tendency of this Chapter, which is to excite and ſtir up *Timothy* to a Conſciencious Diſcharge of his *Miniſterial Function*. If *thou put the Brethren in mind of theſe Things thou ſhalt be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt* ſays St. Paul, *v.* 6. *Till I come give attendance to Reading*, to *Exhortation*, to *Doctrine*, *viz.* Then it immediatly follows, *neglect not the Gift* that *is in thee*, &c. concluding thus, *Meditate upon theſe Things*, *give thy ſelf wholly to them*; *take heed unto thy ſelf and to thy Doctrine*. All theſe Things concerned *Timothy* as he was a *Goſpel Miniſter*, abſtracted from any Power of *working Miracles*. And this was the *Gift* plainly intended by the Text.

UPON the whole, I doubt not, but it has been made appear, to the Impartial Readers ſatisfaction, that here were a *Company of Preſbyters* impoſing Hands on *Timothy*, that by, or with this Solemnity, the Miniſterial *Gift* or *Power* was conveyed; which is the very ſame thing with *Ordination*. And if ſuch did *Ordain* in the firſt Ages of the *Church*, their *Ordination* muſt be ſtill valid; for what *Humane Canon* can diveſt them of that Authority, which originally belonged to their Office, by the Inſtitution of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles? We own this Text to be (as Mr. *Agate* calls it) our *Aſylum*; I may add an *Aſylum* that ſtands on an *immoveable Foundation*, which may defy the impotent Efforts of all that ſhall aſſault it: And I muſt crave leave to tell this *Gentleman*, and the whole *World*, that we value one Sentence of St. *Paul* more than all the bulky Volumes

* Whitby's *Annot. in* Acts 8. 15.

Volumes of *Fathers* and *Councils*, which he or his Friends can heap together. And whilſt we have *one Scripture Example* to Juſtify our *Ordination*, we are not much concerned though the *Canons* and *Decrees of Men* condemn it. But let us hear what Mr. *Agate* offers, to Invalidate the Argument drawn from this part of Holy Writ.

1ſt *Obj.* IN the firſt place he objects, *That there is no Neceſſity of taking* Preſbytery *in this place for a Company of* Preſbyters; *St.* Chryſoſtom, *and others, take it for a Company of Biſhops* [p. 263.]

Anſ. BUT I have already proved, in Oppoſition to this Conceit, that the Scripture Preſbyters were many of them in the very ſame Church; and that they had the Care but of one *individual Congregation*. So that they neither were, nor could be *Dioceſan Biſhops*. And the Opinion of *Chryſoſtom*, or ſome others, who lived 500 or 1000 Years afterwards can be of no ſuch weight as to be laid in the Ballance againſt a Teſtimony taken from the ſacred Records.

2*d Obj.* 'TIS objected in the next place, *That the word Preſbytery* [Πρεσβυτέριον] *may as well denote the Office of a* Preſbyter, *as a Company of* Preſbyters [*ibid.*]

Anſ. BUT had this *Gentleman* intended to give any real Satisfaction to his Reader, inſtead of amuſing us with his Impertinent Quibbles and *May-be*'s, he ſhould have given us ſome Inſtance in which the Word is actually thus taken. We find the ſame Word in ſome other places of Scripture, and there it neceſſarily denotes a Company of Men called *Presbyters*, or *Elders*; and ſo it does in all other *Authors*, as far as I can find; and nothing but a Deſign to ſerve a Cauſe could obtrude another Senſe upon it in this place, eſpecially when he has not been able to produce ſo much as one *Greek* Author to warrant his Conjecture. Beſides, did this *Gentleman*'s *Notion* prevail, how awkward and untoward would the Tranſlation then run? *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which thou haſt received with the laying on of the Hands of the Office of the Presbytery.* But what Hands has an *Office*? Or by what Rules in Rhetorick can ſuch an harſh, ill-favoured Figure be defended? Or laſtly, will this *Gentleman* ſtand to *Calvin*'s Interpretation of this Text which he has quoted? If ſo, we muſt thus read it, *Neg-*

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left not the Gift of the Presbytery *that is in thee*, &c. And this Sense (were it consistent with the Grammatical Construction of the Words) would please me as well as any; for then it would follow, that *Timothy*'s Office was that of a Presbyter, and therefore that Presbyters have a Power of Ordaining, as *Timothy* doubtless had; and this is the very thing I am contending for.

3*d Obj.* 'TIS objected further, *That 'tis not necessary to take the word* χάρισμα (i. e. *Gift*) *for the very Office it self, with which* Timothy *was invested at his Ordination: That it seems rather to import some extraordinary Spiritual Gift bestowed upon him* [p. 264.] To which I Answer.

Ans. THAT this Objection has been already obviated by me, in shewing, that the conferring the extraordinary Gifts of the *Holy Ghost* was the peculiar Province of the *Apostles*; to which persons of an Inferior Order never once pretended. Besides, this *Gentleman* in the very next page, affirms, *That hence* [i. e. from this Text] *it* plainly *follows, that St.* Paul, *as a Bishop, ordained* Timothy *with the Assistance of his* Presbyters. Now then, if *Ordination* be PLAINLY intended in the Text, why does he endeavour to obscure a PLAIN Truth by his impertinent and idle Comment?

4*th Obj.* MY *Antagonist* urges in the Fourth place, *That though* Πρεσβυτέριον *may be taken for a* Colledge of Presbyters, *yet the* Presbytery *mentioned in this Epistle was made up of the Highest Officers in the Church; of Apostles, Evangelists, and persons invested with Episcopal Power; at least St.* Paul *must be allowed to be amongst them* [p. 264.] To which I reply,

Ans. THAT in this place Mr. *Agate* plays over his Old Game, and obtrudes his own wild Conjectures upon the World without any proof, or the least Shadow of probability, as if we were obliged to take his Confident Assertions for Evidence and Demonstration. He gives us no one proof, that a *Company of Apostles* were present at this Solemnity, nor no one Instance in which the word Presbytery signifies an Assembly of such Officers: On the other hand, I have produced those Arguments which do evince, that Scripture Presbyters could not be Bishops in the Modern Acceptation of the word. 'Tis true, St. *Peter*

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and *John* called themſelves Preſbyters, as indeed they were, the leſſer being included in the greater, and this beſpeaks their great Humility and Modeſty; but when one *Apoſtle* ſpeaks of another, he never gives him that diminutive Character The Biſhop of *Sarum* may ſubſcribe himſelf Mr. *Agate*'s *Moſt Obedient Servant*, and this may be an Inſtance of his Lordſhip's Complaiſance and Condeſcention: But ſhould he write, that the Biſhops of *London* and *Wincheſter* were Mr. *Agate*'s *Obedient Servants*, this would be a Complement moſt unaccountably odd and abſurd. The *Judge* upon the Bench calls the *Serjeant* at the Bar his *Brother*, but he never ſalutes another *Judge* by the name of *Brother Serjeant*. Nor does one *Prelate* call another *Brother Preſbyter*, though he diſdains not to give that Title to the meaneſt *Curate* in his Dioceſs, who has but Prieſts Orders. Juſt thus in the Scripture Language, though an *Apoſtle* may ſtile himſelf *Presbyter*, he never gives this Title to others of the *Apoſtolical* Order.

ON the other hand, it is very well worth our obſervation, that whenſoever *Apoſtles* and *Presbyters* are mentioned in the *New Teſtament*, the diſtinction that there was between theſe two *Orders* is carefully regarded. Thus when there was a Diſſention at *Antioch*, about Circumciſion and other Rites of the *Moſaical* Law. 'Twas determined that *Paul* and *Barnabas* ſhould go up to *Jeruſalem*, to conſult the *Apoſtles* and *Presbyters* about this Queſtion. *Acts* 15. 2. When they came there, they were received of the *Apoſtles* and *Presbyters* v. 4. Again, the *Apoſtles* and *Presbyters* came together to conſider of this Matter, *v.* 6. and when they came to a Reſolution, their Letters began thus. The *Apoſtles* and *Presbyters*, &c. *ſend Greeting*, &c. *v.* 23. As *Paul* and *Silas* went through the Cities, they delivered to them the *Decrees* for to keep, that were ordained of the *Apoſtles* and *Presbyters* at *Jeruſalem*, Acts 16. 4. Some Years after this, *Paul* and his Companions came again to *Jeruſalem*, when they went in unto *James*, and all the *Presbyters were preſent*, Acts 21. 18. Where *James*, being an *Apoſtle*, is diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who were of an Inferior Order. And what probability is there that the two *Orders* ſhould be confounded in this Text, when the diſtinction between 'em is ſo carefully obſerved in all others? Beſides, Mr. *Agate* owns in the very next Page, that *Timothy was ordained by St.* Paul *a Biſhop, with the aſſiſtance of his* Presbyters, and this he ſays is *demonſtrable*, if ſo, the *Presbytery* in this Text cannot ſignifie a Company of *Apoſtles*, when there

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was but one *Apoſtle* preſent, and he aſſiſted by Ordinary *Prieſts*.

Mr. *Agate* urges further, *That* Timothy *was a Biſhop, and though the* Preſbyterians *may be ſo Impudent as to take upon them to Ordain* Prieſts, *yet Mr.* Troſs *himſelf never pretended to make a Biſhop* [p. 264.]

THAT *Timothy* was a *Dioceſan Biſhop*, is what we do deny, and ſhould be glad to ſee a good Subſtantial Proof of it. All that we contend for is this, that the Preſbytery Ordained him a *Goſpel Miniſter*; which hinders not, but that St. *Paul*, or rather that Holy Spirit by which he was guided, might inveſt him with a higher Character, give him an extraordinary Commiſſion, with a Superintendency over all thoſe Churches which he ſhould viſit by Virtue of his *Apoſtolical* Miſſion. The Mayor of *Exeter* is inveſted with his Office by the Election of the *Commons*, and the *Recorder*'s Adminiſtring the uſual Oath unto him; but if Her Majeſty pleaſes ſhe may enlarge his Commiſſion, and make this Gentleman a *Judge* or *Lord Chancellor*. And it by no means follows, that becauſe the *Citizens* did not make him a *prime Miniſter*, that therefore they did not make him Mayor of a Corporation. Juſt thus, we may not conclude that *Preſbyters* could not ordain *Timothy* a Goſpel Miniſter, becauſe St. *Paul* did afterwards give him a Juriſdiction over all Ordinary Paſtors: Our Biſhops firſt conſecrate the Arch-biſhop, and then ſwear Canonical Obedience to him.

5*th Obj.* The Fifth and Laſt Objection which my *Antagoniſt* muſters up, is to this effect, *That in the Text there is a perfect Pattern of Epiſcopal Ordination, as 'tis performed at this Day in the Church of* England, *by a* Biſhop *with the Aſſiſtance of his* Preſbyters. *This* (he ſays) *is demonſtrable from the Greek Prepoſitions which St.* Paul *makes uſe of on this Occaſion: In* 1 Tim. 4. 14. *'tis* μετὰ, with the laying on the Hands of the Preſbytery. *But* 2 Tim. 1. 6. *'tis* διὰ, by the Impoſition of my Hands. *The latter denotes the Principal, the former only the Concurring Cauſe. And hence it plainly follows, that St.* Paul *as a* Biſhop *ordained* Timothy *with the Aſſiſtance of his* Preſbyters [p. 265] To all which I reply.

1. THAT as this Critical Remark is borrowed of others, ſo it will do Mr. *Agate* no manner of Service; for notwithſtanding his nice Diſtinction betwixt the two Particles διὰ and μετὰ, they are promiſcuouſly uſed in the *New Teſtament*: It is not

true, that the former always ſignifies a *principal Cauſe*; So for Inſtance, *Romans* 14. 20. *It is Evil to him that eateth,* διὰ προσκόμματος, *with,* not *by Offence.* See alſo 2 *Tim.* 2. 2. 2 *Cor.* 2. 4. On the other Hand, the preposition μετὰ often ſignifys the *principal efficient Cauſe*: Thus, when *Paul* and *Barnabas* came from *Antioch* to *Jeruſalem*, they *declared to the Apoſtles and Elders all that God had done with them,* μετ' αὐτῶν, *Acts* 15. 4. The very ſame thing is expreſſed by δι' αὐτῶν, v. 12. So that both theſe phraſes denote the ſame thing, *viz.* That the *Apoſtles* were, under *God*, the *Cauſes* of many Wonderful and Miraculous *Events.* This very particle is alſo made uſe of upon the ſame Occaſion, *Acts* 14. 27. It is ſaid of *God, That he brought the Children of* Iſrael *out of* Egypt *with an high Arm,* μετὰ βραχίονος ὑψηλοῦ, *Acts* 13. 17. I hope Mr. *Agate* will allow *God's Arm* to be the *principal Cauſe* of his Peoples Deliverance from the Houſe of Bondage; And why may not the *Presbyters Hands* impoſed on *Timothy*, be the *principal Cauſe* of his *Ordination*, the very ſame particle being made uſe of in both Texts? If we conſult prophane Authors, we find *Homer* introducing *Apollo*, reſcuing his Favourite *Æneas* out of the Hands of his Purſuers, upon which he thus expreſſeth himſelf:

Καὶ τὸν μὲν μετὰ χερσὶν ἐρύσατο φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.
Iliad. 5. *ver.* 344.

Let our profound Critick, upon reading this Verſe, inform us, whether *Apollo's* Hands were not the *principal Cauſe* of *Æneas's* Deliverance.

IF Mr. *Agate* underſtands his *Mother Tongue*, he can't be ignorant, that the words WITH and BY are often uſed promiſcuouſly in our own Language: Thus I may ſay, *That ſuch a Child was baptized* with or *by the pouring of Water on his Face, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. Such a Nobleman was made Lord-Steward, or Comptroler of Her Majeſty's Houſhold,* with or *by the Queens Delivery of a white Staff unto him*; this being the Ceremony whereby he is inveſted in his Office. Thus when 'tis ſaid of *Timothy*, that he received a Gift *by* the Impoſition of St. *Paul's* Hands, or *with* the laying on of the Hands of the *Presbytery.* The ſame thing is denoted by theſe different Expreſſions, even his *Admiſſion* to the ſacred *Function*; and that this was the Rite made uſe of at his

Inveſtiture: So that Mr. *Agate*'s Criticiſm upon the Particles *by* and *with*, is, in truth, a grand piece of Impertinence, and will do his Cauſe no manner of ſervice.

2. THOUGH it be certain, that St. *Paul* laid his Hands on *Timothy*, yet we cannot be ſure that he did it at the ſame time with the *Presbytery*; perhaps it might be at another Time, and to another End. We find, that the *Holy Ghoſt*, in its Miraculous *Gifts* and *Powers*, was conferred by *the laying on the Hands* of this *Apoſtle*, *Acts* 19. 6. And this might be the Deſign of his impoſing Hands on *Timothy*.

3. BUT we will ſuppoſe, that St. *Paul* laid his Hands on *Timothy*, together with a number of *Presbyters*; this is a plain Acknowledgment of an inherent Power of Ordination belonging to their Order. Will the Mayor of *Exeter* allow thoſe who are no Juſtices of the Peace, to ſet their Hands and Seals to his Warrants? Will Mr. *Agate* permit his *Clerk* or *Sexton*, or indeed the beſt *Layman* in his Pariſh, to pour Water on a Child's Face, together with himſelf in *Baptiſm*? As little Reaſon have we to imagine, that St. *Paul* would have permitted *Presbyters* to lay on their Hands by his in Ordination, had they had no power to Ordain.

IT is indeed boldly aſſerted by Mr. *Roberts*, in his late *Viſitation Sermon*, p. 13. 'That by St. *Paul*'s Authority alone 'the Ordination of *Timothy* was compleat; and if meer Preſ-'byters laid on their Hands, it was to teſtify their Conſent and 'Approbation. But this *Interpretation* is abſolutely repugnant to the Text, which affirms, That this Gift was conferred *by* or *with* the *laying on the Hands of the* Preſbytery: Whereas St. *Paul* was but a ſingle Perſon, and neither was, nor poſſibly could be, a *Preſbytery*. If this Gentleman has got ſuch a pretty knack of Multiplication, that he can make a Company of One Man, 'tis pity but he ſhould ſpend the next Campaign with the Duke of *Marlborough*, where he might do more than *Knights Service*, and prevent a World of Trouble and Expence in raiſing Recruits. The Mayor of this City hath doubtleſs a power to commit Malefactors to Priſon; but when other Juſtices ſet their Hands and Seals to the ſame *Mittimus*, it would be abſolutely *falſe* in Matter of Fact, to affirm, that ſuch a Criminal was ſent to Goal by the Mayor's ſingle Warrant. Juſt ſo, tho' the *Apoſtle* might have conferred *Holy Orders* by his own ſingle Authority; yet when the Scriptures poſitively affirm, That *Timothy* was ordained by a *Presbytery*, or *Company of Prieſts*.

Prieſts. 'Tis a direct flying in the Face of thoſe ſacred Records, to pretend, that his *Ordination* was finiſhed and compleated by One ſingle Man.

IN one word; if St. *Paul* was one of the *Presbytery*, he acted only in the Capacity of a *Presbyter*, which he was as well as an *Apoſtle*, the leſſer being included in the greater. The *Judges* that travel our Circuits, are alſo *Juſtices of the Peace* in thoſe reſpective Counties through which they travel. Suppoſe that one of that Character ſhould concur with other *Juſtices*, in making ſuch an *Order*, or doing ſuch an *Act*, for Inſtance, in Impreſſing an Able Man to ſerve the *Queen*, and it were entered upon the *Court-Rolls*, that ſuch an *Order* was made by the *Juſtices of the Peace* for the County of *Devon*; no Man that reads theſe *Records* an Age or two hence, but will preſently conclude, that the *Gentlemen* who were in Commiſſion of the Peace, had power to make ſuch an *Order*; and that its Validity did not depend on the Concurrence of one particular Perſon, who was alſo a *Judge*. Juſt thus, when we read that *Timothy* was Ordained by a *Company of Presbyters*, though St. *Paul* was one of the Company; yet we may reaſonably conclude, that he acted not in his *Apoſtolical* Capacity, but as a Member of that *Presbytery*, though the principal amongſt 'em. We may alſo infer, that the Validity of this *Ordination*, did not depend on him *alone*; for then *Timothy* was not Ordained by a *Presbytery*, as the Text aſſerts, but by a ſingle Perſon, and he of an higher Order. To all that has been ſaid I may add,

4. IN the Fourth place, that after all the Pains Mr. *Agate* has taken to *darken* and *obſcure* this plain perſpicuous *Text*, it ſtill ſhines with ſo great a Luſtre, as to conſtrain him to grant me the very thing for which I am contending. If I do not prove by his own Conceſſions, that *Presbyters* have a Power of Ordaining, I'll never more pretend to Argument or Reaſon. This *Gentleman* confeſſes, *That St.* Paul *Ordained* Timothy *with the ASSISTANCE of his* Preſbyters, *and that they were the Concurring Cauſe* [p. 265.] Hence I argue, If Preſbyters were *Aſſiſtants* at an *Ordination*, then they had a *power* of Ordaining; or otherwiſe, they would be *Aſſiſtants* without any *power* to ASSIST. Again; if Preſbyters were *Concurring Cauſes* at *Timothy*'s Ordination, then they were *Cauſes*; and if *Cauſes* of Ordination, they muſt have a *power* to Ordain, or otherwiſe they would be *Cauſes* without any *power* to produce their *Effects*; that is, they would be *Cauſes* and *No Cauſes* at the

ſame time. And this I'm ſure is ſuch a Monſter, both in *Nature* and *Metaphyſicks*, as was never yet heard of: So that this *Gentleman*, after all the Bluſter that he has made about the pretended *Senſe* of the *Catholick Church* for 1500 Years together, is forced to own, that Preſbyters, in Scripture Times, were *Cauſes* of Ordination; which 'tis abſolutely impoſſible they ſhould ever be, without an inherent *power* of Ordaining. So great is the Force of Truth, that it ſometimes conſtrains an Acknowledgment from its moſt vehement Oppoſers.

THOUGH this be the *principal* Text inſiſted on to prove the *Validity of a* Preſbyterian *Ordination*, yet 'tis not the only one made uſe of to that purpoſe: Wherefore,

A *Second Argument* produced to this End, is founded on the Example of thoſe *Prophets* and *Teachers* which were at *Antioch*, who were commanded by the Holy Ghoſt, *to ſeparate* Barnabas *and* Saul, *for the Work whereunto he had called them*. And accordingly, when they had *faſted and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they ſent them away*, Acts 13. 1, 2, 3. As for the perſons called in this place *Teachers*, they are carefully diſtinguiſhed from the *Apoſtolical* Order. God hath ſet ſome in the Church, firſt *Apoſtles*, ſecondarily *Prophets*, thirdly *Teachers*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. Epheſ. 4. 11. From hence 'tis evident, that theſe *Teachers* were not *Apoſtles*, nor could they be *Biſhops*, which pretend to ſucceed the other in the very ſame Order: And yet theſe perſons did, by *Faſting, Prayer*, and *Impoſition of Hands*, *ſet apart* Paul *and* Barnabas *to the preaching of the Goſpel among the Gentiles*. And what is this but *Ordination*? 'Tis true, St. *Paul* had no need of an *Ordination* from *Men*, having received an extraordinary Commiſſion from *Jeſus Chriſt*. Our Saviour had no need of *Baptiſm*, having no Sin or Guilt to repent of, or to be waſhed away: However, being about to make *Baptiſm* a ſtanding Ordinance in the Chriſtian Church, He condeſcended ſo far as to ſubmit himſelf unto it. Juſt ſo, might St. *Paul* ſubmit to *Ordination*; not becauſe 'twas neceſſary in Relation to himſelf, but to ſatisfy and convince the World, that this was to be the Ordinary Method for the future, by which perſons were to be admitted to the *Miniſterial Function*. And this ſolemnity was performed by ſuch as had no *Epiſcopal Character*. An Argument, that ſuch as pretend unto it, have no Reaſon to look upon *Ordination* as their peculiar Province, excluſive of all others.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, THE *Validity of* Presbyterian *Ordination* is further argued from the *Identity* between *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in their Original Institution. The Scriptures never mention any Difference between these two *Orders*; they are described by the same *Names*, and have the same *Titles* given them. They that are called *Presbyters*, *Acts* 20. 17. are in the 28th Verse called *Bishops* (for so it is in the Original, though we translate the word *Overseers.*) The same *Qualifications* are required in them both, *Tit.* 1. 5. compared with v. 7, *&c.* The same *Work* and *Duty* is enjoyned them both, *Acts* 20. 28. 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. We find more *Bishops* than one in the same City; for which Reason, they could not be of the *Diocesan* Stamp, *Phil.* 1. 1. When *Directions* are given to *Gospel Ministers*, how to *govern* and *demean* themselves in their respective Stations, there are only *two Orders* taken Notice of; which gives us Reason to conclude, that there are no more which can pretend to a *Divine Institution*, and were designed for a perpetual Duration in the Church. Should the *Queen* grant a *Charter* to any Town or City, which describes the *Qualifications* and *Duties* of Common-Council-Men, Stewards, and other Inferior Officers, but takes no Notice of the *Mayor*, who is the Head of the *Corporation*, would not this be looked upon as a most unaccountable Omission? The Holy Scriptures, which are the *Grand Charter* of Christianity, describe to us the *Duties*, *Qualifications*, *Work* and *Business* of *Deacons*, and other *Ministers*, who are promiscuously called *Bishops* and *Presbyters*; and can any Reasonable Man believe, that had a Prelate been the Chief Officer in the Church, and absolutely necessary to the very Being of it, we should have heard nothing of it in all the *New Testament*? Not one word of his *Qualifications* for his Office, his *Business* in it, the *Manner* of his *Investiture*, or his Peoples *Duty* and *Obligation* to him. The Silence of the Scriptures on these Heads, give us Reason to conclude, that *Prelacy* owes its Original, not to a *Divine*, but *Humane Institution.* I have only hinted at the two last Arguments, which the Reader may find more largely prosecuted by Mr. *Owen*, in his *Plea for Scripture Ordination*, and the Authors of the *Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry.*

I shall, in the next place, consider, Whether Presbyterian Ordination be such a Novelty in the *Christian World* as is pretended? And whether Mr. *Agate* has any Reason to make so great a Noise and Bluster as he has done, about the pretended *Sense* of the *Catholick Church* for 1500 Years together? And if I can fairly prove, that such an *Ordination* has been esteem'd

Valid,

Valid, I have gained my point, our *Adverſaries* themſelves being Judges.

HOWEVER, before I make this Eſſay, I would premiſe one thing, that, according to the *6th Article* of the *Church of England*, we do not look upon any thing as *requiſite to Salvation, which may not be read in Holy Scripture, or proved thereby.* Nay, when Mr. *Agate* was Ordained, the Biſhop propoſed this Queſtion to him, *Be you perſwaded, that the Holy Scriptures contain ſufficiently all Doctrine required of Neceſſity for Eternal Salvation? And are you determined to teach nothing (as required of Neceſſity to Eternal Salvation) but what you ſhall be perſwaded may be proved by the Scripture?* To which he returned this Anſwer, *I am ſo perſwaded, and have ſo determined by God's Grace* *. Now ſure it can be no Breach of Modeſty in us to remind this *Gentleman*, and his Brethren, of their *Ordination Vows:* And if *Biſhops* be neceſſary to the Being of a Church, and by Conſequence to Salvation, we deſire that they would perform their Promiſe, made with ſuch great Solemnity, and inſtead of amuſing us with *Fathers* and *Councils*, that they would prove *this point* by the *Word of God*; which if they cannot do, as I know none that pretend to without the Aſſiſtance of *fallible Tradition* and *Humane Canons*, that then they would leave this as a Controverted Point, which may be believed or not, without any great Harm done. Theſe things premiſed, I thus argue.

Arg. 1ſt, THEY who are Succeſſors to the *Apoſtles*, have *power* of Ordaining.

BUT *Presbyters* are Succeſſors to the *Apoſtles*, therefore *Presbyters* have *power* of Ordaining.

I preſume the Reader will not expect that I ſhould ſpend much time in proving the firſt of theſe Propoſitions. That Authority which our Modern Prelates claim, both to *ordain* and *govern* Preſbyters, is founded upon this Suppoſition, that *Biſhops* ſucceed the *Apoſtles* in their Superintendency over Chriſtian Churches. This is what Mr. *Burſcough*, and the moſt Eminent Defenders of *Epiſcopacy* have ſtrenuouſly contended for: 'Tis in truth the very *Baſis* on which our *Engliſh* Prelacy would be thought to ſtand; And the very *Tenure* by which they pretend to hold their Eccleſiaſtical Prerogatives. If therefore it can be proved, by good Authentick Evidences, that Preſ-

* Sparrow's *Collect.* p. 155.

Presbyters are *Successors to the Apostles* as well as *Bishops*. I hope the Reader will be satisfy'd, that there was no such vast Distinction between those two, in their *Original Institution*, as is pretended; and that they who succeed the *Apostles* in the Ordinary standing parts of their Office, must have a *power* to Ordain *Gospel Ministers*, in order to the securing this Succession.

THIS being therefore the Proposition I am oblig'd to prove, I shall produce the *Testimonies* of those Christian Writers, who are most Eminent for their Antiquity, and of the best Established Reputation in the Church, our *Adversaries* themselves being Judges.

[1.] THE First Witness I shall produce on this Head, is, the famous Martyr *Ignatius*, of the Credit of whose Epistles our *Episcopal* Brethren are so infinitely fond, that Bp. *Pearson* and Dr. *Hammond* have written large Volumes to prove them to be genuine: And Mr. *Agate* has represented this Father, as *living in an Age when Apostolical Traditions were fresh and undisputed* [p. 104.] 'Tis owned, that this *Author* speaks very magnificently of a *Bishop*, (if those lofty Expressions are not foisted in by a later Hand, as 'tis apparent by *Usher*'s Edition of his Epistles that many of a like Nature have but I cannot remember one Expression which seems to appropriate *Ordination* to a *Bishop*, any more than *Baptism* and the *Administration* of the *Lords-Supper*. But let us see what he says concerning Presbyters and their Original: In his Epistle to the *Smirneans*, he calls upon them, 'to follow the Bishop as Jesus 'Christ did the Father, and the Presbytery as the Apostles *. And in another place, 'he represents the Presbyters as sitting in 'the place of the Consistory of the Apostles †. So that how Great soever the *Ignatian Prelate* may be thought to be, the Presbytery is, by the very same Author, represented as succeeding to, and coming in the room of, the *Apostolical Colledge*. This is a Concession we are well contented with, and think we need no other to prove the *Validity* of a *Presbyterian Ordination*.

[2.] A

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* Καὶ τῷ Πρεσβυτερίῳ ὡς τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις, Ignat. Ep. ad Smirn.

† ----------ἡ τῶν Πρεσβυτέρων εἰς τόπον συνεδρίου τῶν Ἀποστόλων, Ib. Ep. ad Magnes.

[2.] A Second Witneſs to the ſame purpoſe is *Irenæus*, Bp. of *Lyons*, who flouriſhed in the Second Century, who thus expreſſes himſelf when diſputing againſt the *Valentinian Hereticks*: 'When (*ſays he*) we challenge thoſe who are Enemies to 'Tradition, to have Recourſe to that *Tradition*, which is de-'rived from the *Apoſtles*, and which by a SUCCESSION of 'PRESBYTERS is preſerved in the Churches; will they ſay 'that they are Wiſer not only than Presbyters, but even than 'the *Apoſtles* themſelves *. If any thing can be more expreſs and poſitive, 'tis the Aſſertion of the ſame Author, who in another place affirms, 'That Men ought to obey thoſe Preſby-'ters which are in the Church, even thoſe who have their SUCCESSION FROM THE APOSTLES, who with the Succeſſion 'of Epiſcopacy, have received the certain Gift of Truth, ac-'cording to the good pleaſure of the *Father* †. In which Quotation there are theſe two things plainly aſſirmed: Firſt, That Presbyters are *Succeſſors* to the *Apoſtles*. Secondly, That their *Succeſſion*, and the *Succeſſion* of *Epiſcopacy*, is the ſame thing, and by Conſequence, that according to their Original Inſtitution, they were the ſame with Biſhops; though Cuſtom and the Conſent of Churches hath ſince made ſo great a Difference. 'Tis further remarkable, that this Venerable Author is looked upon by our Brethren, as an *eminent* and *topping* Prelate; and therefore cannot be ſuſpected of Partiality in favour of an Inferior Order, or of any Deſign to derogate from the Dignity and Honour of his own Character.

[3.] A Third Witneſs, who ſpeaks the Language of the former, is *Clement* of *Alexandria*, who alſo flouriſhed in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity. Having ſpoken of *Judas* his Election to the Apoſtleſhip, and his unworthy Conduct in it, he proceeds in theſe following words: 'Wherefore *Matthias*, though he 'was not choſen together with the reſt, when he had approv'd 'himſelf worthy to become an *Apoſtle*, was ſubſtituted in the 'room of *Judas*. And it is poſſible even NOW for thoſe who 'exerciſe

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* *Cum autem ad eam iterum Traditionem, quæ ab Apoſtolis, quæ per Succeſſiones Presbyterorum in Eccleſiis Cuſtoditur, provocamus eos qui adverſantur Traditioni, &c.* Iren. *adv. Hær. l.* 3. *c.* 2.

† *Qua propter eis qui in Eccleſia ſunt Presbyteris obaudire oportet, iis qui Succeſſionem habent ab Apoſtolis, qui cum Epiſcopatus ſucceſſione Chariſma Veritatis Certum, ſecundum placitum Patris acceperunt.* Iren. *adv. Hær. l.* 4. *c.* 43.

'exerciſe themſelves in the Divine Commands, who live know-
'ingly, and as becomes the *Goſpel*, to be enroled in the ***Num-***
'ber of the Apoſtles. This is a real Preſbyter of the Church,
'and a true Miniſter of God's Will, if he does and teaches the
'things of God; nor is he eſteemed a Juſt Man, becauſe he is a
'Preſbyter, and ordained by Men, but becauſe he is a juſt Man,
'therefore is he taken into the Preſbytery *. In the firſt of theſe Sentences, this *Learned Author* takes it for granted, that in the Age in which he lived, ſome Men might be reckoned in the *Number of the Apoſtles*; (by which he muſt underſtand their Succeſſors in the *Goſpel Miniſtry*, they themſelves being dead ſome Scores of Years before.) In the next Sentence he deſcribes the Man that deſerves ſo high a Character, and that is the Preſbyter, who adorns his Function by a Wiſe and Holy *Converſation.* And it is evident to any one that conſults this paſſage, that the Preſbytery in the latter part of it anſwers to the *Catalogue* of *Apoſtles* in the former; and this being granted, we need no more to prove the Validity of a Preſbyterian Ordination.

[4.]. I ſhall next preſent the Reader with a paſſage to be found in the *Conſtitutions* commonly called *Apoſtolical*, pretended to be drawn up by St. *Clement* their Diſciple. 'Tis agreed on all Hands, that they are not ſo Ancient as the firſt *Compiler* of them would fain perſwade the World: *Dupin* ſuppoſes, that their firſt Appearance in the World was in the 3d or 4th Century. I ſhall not therefore cite them as the Words of St. *Clement*, but as the Senſe of the Church in that Age in which they were received; but thus they expreſs themſelves: 'Let the Preſbyters (*ſay they*) be eſteemed as thoſe
'who are in the PLACE of us the APOSTLES †. Theſe words are ſo plain, that they need no paraphraſe, and effectually confirm the thing for which they are produced.

* ἕξειν οὖν ἢ νῦν ταῖς κυριακαῖς ἐνασκήσαντας ἐν πολαῖς κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον----- εἰς τὴν ἐκλογὴν τῶν Α ποστόλων ἐγγεγραφήναι. οὗτος πρεσβύτερος ἐστι τῷ ὄντι τ ἐκκλησίας, &c. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 6. p. 667.

† ὅτε πρεσβύτεροι εἰς τόπον ἡμῶν τῶν Αποστόλων νομίζεσθωσαν. Cit. by Walo Meſſal. p. 294.

[5.] THE Fifth Witneſs which I ſhall produce to the ſame purpoſe is St. *Jerom*, who is known by every one to be a mighty Stickler for a *Monaſtick* Life, and whoſe Zeal ſometimes tranſports him to write with great Severity againſt all thoſe who did not ſubſcribe to his *Notions*, and were not ſo much in love with a *Wilderneſs* as himſelf. His *Works* begin with an high *Encomium* upon *Solitude* and *Contemplation*, and runs the Matter ſo far, as if it were ſcarce poſſible for a Man that lived in Cities, and ſaw ſo much of the Gayety and Vanity of an enticing World, to be a good Chriſtian, or at leaſt a Chriſtian of Conſummative Piety and Virtue. Having exſpaciated a while, after his florid Manner, upon this *Topick*, he comes to anſwer an Objection: 'You will be ready (*ſays he to 'his Friend*) to appeal to the Clergy, and ask me, If I dare 'ſay any thing againſt them, who yet have their Reſidence in 'Cities? To which St. *Jerom* anſwers, Far be it from me, 'that I ſhould ſpeak any ill thing of thoſe, who, SUCCEED-'ING to the APOSTOLICAL DEGREE, do with their ſa-'cred Mouth make the Body of *Chriſt*, and by whom we our-'ſelves are made Chriſtians *. That is, in other words, who have *power* to adminiſter the *Sacraments* of *Baptiſm* and the *Lords-Supper*. So that all thoſe who are inveſted with this Authority, that is all Preſbyters, are ſaid by this Learned Father to ſucceed the *Apoſtolical Degree*. And in another of his Epiſtles he thus expreſſes himſelf: 'Let Biſhops and Preſbyters 'take for their Example, the *Apoſtles* and *Apoſtolical Men*; 'and ſeeing they *poſſeſs their Honour*, let them endeavour to 'obtain their Merit †. So that if this Renowned Author deſerves any Credit, Presbyters do, as well as Biſhops, poſſeſs the *Honour* of an *Apoſtolical Succeſſion*.

[6.] NEXT to the Teſtimony of *St. Jerom*, I ſhall produce that of his dear Friend *St. Auſtin*, or whoever was the Author of thoſe *Sermons to the Brethren in the Wilderneſs*, which are bound up with the *Works* of that Father. He has one Diſcourſe particularly directed to his Presbyters, who did not

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* *Abſit ut de his quicquam ſiniſtrum loquar, qui Apoſtolico gradui ſuccedentes, Chriſti Corpus ſacro Ore conficiunt, per quos & nos Chriſtiani ſumus.* Hier. *Ep. ad Heliodor.*

† *Epiſcopi & Presbyteri habeant in Exemplum Apoſtolos, & Apoſtolicos Viros: quorum Honorem poſſidentes, habere nitantur & Meritum.* Hier. *Ep. ad* Paulinum.

not lead their Lives so regularly as they ought to do; to whom he addresses himself in these following words: 'You are the 'Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World, the Sons of the 'Prophets, and the *Successors of the Apostles* *. Than which nothing can be a plainer Confirmation of what I have advanced.

I shall conclude my Evidence on this Head with that of *devout Salvian*, who inveighing against the *Covetousness of the Clergy* in his Days, mentions that Charge which our *Saviour* gave his *Apostles*, Mat. 10. 9, 10. *Provide neither Gold, nor Silver, nor Brass in your Purses, nor Scrip for your Journey, neither Shoes, nor yet Staves.* On which Text the good Man thus paraphrases: 'What can be said more? He took 'Money out of the Apostles Hands, and though they were to 'travel over the whole World, he left them not the use of a 'single Staff: Yet after all this, 'tis not enough for their *Suc-* 'cessors, that is the *Levites* and the *Priests*, if they be Rich 'themselves, unless they leave Wealthy Heirs behind 'em †. 'Twas never yet known, since *Prelates* got such an *Ascendency* over their *Inferior Clergy*, that they were stiled by that Diminutive Name *Levites*; and therefore, the least that can be inferred from this *Citation* is, that *Presbyters* are *Successors to the Apostles.*

THUS have I produced a Cloud of Witnesses, who all attest to the Truth of that *Proposition* which I undertook to prove, nor can it be pretended, with the least colour of *Reason*, that *Presbyters* succeed the *Apostles* only in some part of their Office, *viz.* that of *Preaching*, and *Administring the Sacraments*, whilest *Bishops* succeed them in the *Government*; for there is not the least Shadow of such a *Limitation* or *Distinction*, in any of the Authors that I have cited; In all which 'tis directly affirmed, that the *former* do succeed the *Apostles*, and that in as ample and full a manner, as the *Bishops* themselves are said to do by any other Author. And if this *Succession* proves a *Power of Ordination* in the *one*, it proves the same in the *other* also.

MY

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* *Vos estis sal Terræ, Lux Mundi---- Prophetarum filii, Apostolorum Successores. Aug. ad fratres in Eremo. Ser.* 36.

† *Et post Hæc parum est Successoribus eorum, id est Levitis & Sacerdotibus, &c. Salvian. ad Eccles. Cathol. l.* 2. *p.* 381.

MY next Argument, founded on Antiquity, to prove the *Validity of Presbyterian Ordination*, shall be taken from the *Chorepiscopi*; an *Order of Ecclesiasticks*, which we read of in the latter end of the Third, or beginning of the Fourth *Century*. As for the Original and Signification of the *Word*, it is not agreed upon amongst Learned Men, whether it signifies a *Village Bishop*, or a *Bishops Vicar* one that acts in his Place and Stead; this is certain, that, according to the Discipline of that Age, he had something of a *Superintendency* over the *Country Clergy*, but was himself liable to the Controul and Censure of the *City Bishop*. Nor is there the least Hint in all Antiquity, as if *Episcopal Consecration* were necessary to qualify him for his Office. But my Argument, when drawn in Form, will thus stand:

Arg. 2. IF the *Chorepiscopi* had in the Primitive Church a *Power of Ordaining*, then meer *Presbyters* had a *Power of Ordaining*.

BUT the *Chorepiscopi* had then a *Power of Ordaining*, therefore meer *Presbyters* had such a *Power*.

TO make good this Argument, I have these two things to do: (1.) To prove that these *Chorepiscopi* had a *power of Ordination*. And then (2.) that they were *meer Presbyters*. Which two Points being gained, the *Conclusion* will stand firm and unshaken, and may easily bid Defiance to all the impotent Efforts of Railery and bitter Censures.

[1.] THE First *Proposition* I am to prove is, That the *Chorepiscopi* had a *power of Ordination*. This appears by the famous Council of *Antioch*, assembled about the Year of our Lord 341; which gives them a General Commission of Ordaining those Inferior sorts of Clergy-men, which had at that time a Being in the Church, particularly *Sub-Deacons*, *Readers* 'and *Exorcists*; but at the same time decrees, That they at-'tempt not to ordain *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, without *speci-'al Leave from* the *City Bishop*, to whom they are said to be 'subject *. Hence 'tis evident, they could confer some sort of Orders as oft as they thought fit; and that an *Episcopal License* could Authorize them to ordain even *Presbyters* themselves; which could not be, unless they had an *Original power*

* Conc. Antioc. Can. 10

er of *Ordaining*, though the Exercise of that Power was restrained by *Ecclesiastical Laws* and *Canons*. 'Tis worthy our Observation, that the Decrees of this *Synod* were confirmed by the 6th *General Council* in *Trullo*, (according to the computation of the *Greeks*) and were taken into the *Code* of the Universal Church; and therefore ought to be look'd upon as the *Sense* of the whole Christian World at that time.

WHAT was now determined concerning these *Chorepiscopi* by the *Synod* at *Antioch*, seems to be an *Exposition* on the 13th *Canon* of the Council of *Ancyra*, forbidding them to ordain *Presbyters* or *Deacons* without a *License* under the *Bishop*'s Hand. Which Prohibition, necessarily implies an Original Power of conferring *Holy Orders* in these Persons, for were *Ordination* peculiarly appropriated by *Christ* or his *Apostles* to a *Bishop*, he could no more Authorize one that is not a Bishop to perform this part of his Office, than Mr. *Agate* can Authorize his Sexton to consecrate the *Eucharist*, or to baptize an Infant.

A little after these Councils, St. *Basil* of *Cæsarea* made a considerable Figure in the Church: He gives us this Account of the *Chorepiscopi*, 'How that formerly their Custom was, when 'they had received a good Character of one that was a Candi-'date for the Ministry, from such of the Neighbouring *Clergy* 'as had narrowly inspected his Conversation; first to advise 'the Bishop of it, and then to *number* such in the *Sacerdotal* 'Order. He upbraids them with their present Remisness, and 'conjures them to be more strict in their Examinations for the 'future, to acquaint him with the Qualifications of such Per-'sons, and so have his Approbation to *Ordain* them †.

To what has been said, I might add the Testimonies of *Isidore* of *Sevil*, *Rabanus Maurus*, and many others, who all agree, that the *Chorepiscopi* did frequently confer *Holy Orders*; nor is this denied by the most *zealous Patrons* of *Episcopacy*: And a *Modern Author* of good Note; who has written the *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, acknowledges so much as this is *. The great Question therefore is, *whether these Persons had* Episcopal *Consecration*, OR WERE ONLY *Presbyters*? Our Modern *Prelatists* generally affirm the *former*; but whether it be *Affection* or *Judgment*, that determines them in this Affair, the Reader may more easily guess, when he has consider'd those *Reasons* which induce me to conclude, that they

† Basil. *Ep.* 181. * Bingham *Orig. Eccles. Vol.* 1. *pag.* 169.

they were no more than *Presbyters*, though they might have some *peculiar Priviledges* and *Jurisdictions*, as our *Arch-Deacons* now have.

[1.] MY first Argument to prove, that these Persons were no *real proper* Bishops, is grounded upon those *Ancient Testimonies* which positively affirm, that they were Instituted after the Example of the *seventy Disciples*. 'Tis the *open* and *avowed Doctrine* of the most *eminent* Defenders of *Episcopacy*, *That* Bishops *are* Successors *to the* Apostles, *and* Presbyters *to the* Seventy Disciples: This is the *Foundation* on which the present *Hierarchy* seems to stand; the *Ground* on which its Mighty *Champions* chuse to fight, in order to Triumph over all their *Adversaries*: This is the Scheme which the late Mr. Arch-deacon *Burscough* draws up, in all his celebrated Pieces against the *Dissenters*. If, therefore, it be made appear, that these *Chorepiscopi* were at first appointed in *imitation* of the *Seventy* and not of the *Twelve Apostles*, I hope Mr. *Agate*, or at least the *Impartial Reader*, will be satisfied, that they were in the apprehension of the *Christian World* no more than *Presbyters*. And that they were so, we have the express Testimony, not of a particular Writer, but a whole Council of *Bishops* assembled at *Neocæsarea* about the Year of our *Lord* 314. who affirm in so many Words, 'that the *Chorepiscopi* were after 'the Example of the *Seventy* *. And therefore could have no such thing as an *Episcopal Authority*. For though *Presbyters* are often said to succeed the *Apostles*, as being Originally the same with *Bishops*; yet, since these latter came to have such a Superintendency over the former, not one Writer can be produced by whom they are pretended only to *succeed* the *Seventy*. To which I may add, that the *Canons* of this *Synod* were afterwards taken into the *Code* of the Universal Church; and therefore may be looked upon as the prevailing Sense thereof.

WHAT was asserted by this *Council*, stands confirmed by many Ancient Authors, particularly by *Isidorus Hispalensis* † *Rabanus Maurus*, as well as the *Decretal Epistles*, which go under the Names of *Damasus*, and *Leo* the Great; but there is no need of heaping up a Multitude of Testimonies in a Case so plain and obvious; I must leave it to the Reader's consideration,

* Οἱ δὲ χωρεπίσκοποι εἰσὶ μὲν εἰς τύπον τῶν ἑβδομήκοντα, *Con. Neocæs. c.* 14. † *Chorepiscopi---- instituti sunt ad Exempla* 70 *Seniorum.* Isid. Hisp. *de Offic. Eccles. l.* 2. *c.* 6.

ſideration, whether there be the leaſt Degree of Probability, that theſe Perſons could be *more than Presbyters*, when all Antiquity concurs in this, That they were firſt Inſtituted in Imitation of the *Seventy Diſciples*.

[2.] MY ſecond Argument to prove that the Ancient *Chorepiſcopi* were no more than *Presbyters*, is founded upon this, that they had no other Ordination but what was *common* to *Presbyters*, without making any manner of Pretence to an *Epiſcopal Conſecration*, diſtinct *from*, and ſuperadded *to*, the former. Whoever has the leaſt Acquaintance with Antiquity, muſt know, that ever ſince *Biſhops* got an Aſcendency over the *Inferior Clergy*, the Concurrence of ſeveral *Prelates* has been thought abſolutely neceſſary to give a Man a Valid Title to that Dignity. The two firſt of thoſe *Canons*, which are commonly called *Apoſtolical*, determine, That a *Biſhop* muſt be Ordained by two or three other *Biſhops*, and a *Presbyter* by one.

THOSE Fathers who aſſembled at the firſt General Council at *Nice*, made a Decree to the ſame purpoſe, but with a greater Air of *ſtrictneſs* and *ſeverity*: 'They declare it highly 'convenient, that all the *Biſhops* of the Province ſhould be 'preſent at the Ordination of a Fellow *Biſhop*. But if this be 'not practicable, by reaſon of the greatneſs of the Journey, or 'any other Difficulty, they determine, That Three muſt by all 'means meet together, and thoſe that are abſent, having ſignified their Conſent by Letter, the Conſecration may be then performed *.

ABOUT the ſame time, the *Weſtern Biſhops* held a Council at *Arles* in *France*, in which they do abſolutely forbid the Ordination of a Biſhop, unleſs there be Three aſſiſting at it, and require the concurrence of Seven, if ſo many may be conveniently drawn together †.

AS theſe Decrees were frequently enacted, ſo they were religiouſly obſerved in thoſe Ages of the Church, of which we are ſpeaking: Of this we have a remarkable Inſtance in one *Armentarius*, who was Ordained Biſhop of *Ebredunum* only by two Biſhops; upon which Occaſion there was a Council held at *Ries* in *France*, who, upon a full hearing of the *cauſe*, came to this Reſolution: 'Foraſmuch (*ſay they*) as the *Canons* of 'the Church have declared ſuch an Ordination to be null, we 'alſo

* *Con.* Nicæn, *can.* 4. † *Con.* Arelat. *can.* 21.

'alſo adjudge it to be abſolutely void, and of no effect ‖. But ſeeing the ſaid *Armentarius* had renounced his Pretenſions, and ſubmitted to their cenſure, they allowed him the Title and Priviledges of a *Chorepiſcopus*, provided he complied with thoſe Conditions which were then preſcribed unto him.

I doubt not but theſe Authorities will ſufficiently prove the Thing for which they are alledged: To return therefore to the *Chorepiſcopi*, of whom we find frequent mention in that very Age which gave Birth to the above-named Conſtitutions. And can it be pretended on their Behalf, that they had *Epiſcopal Conſecration*? Or that their Ordination differed in any Reſpect from that of *common Presbyters*? Did ever Three *Biſhops* concur in the Inſtalling any one of them into their New Dignity? Should Mr. *Agate* ranſack all the bulky Volumes of Antiquity, I am very confident he would not be able to produce one Inſtance of this Nature.

ON the contrary, the Council of *Antioch*, whoſe Decrees, as I have already obſerved, were confirmed by the 6th General Council, and received into the *Code* of the Univerſal Church; this very Council, I ſay, determines, 'That a *Chorepiſcopus* 'ſhall be conſtituted [not by a plurality of Biſhops, but] by 'the Biſhop of the City to which he is ſubject *. 'Tis alſo remarkable, that this very Council made another Decree at the ſame time with the former, in which they reſolve, 'That a 'Biſhop is not to be ordained without a *Synod*, and the Pre'ſence of his *Metropolitan*; That it is highly convenient that 'all the Biſhops of the Province ſhould be preſent at his Con'ſecration: But if this could not be, 'twas yet altogether re'quiſite, that many of them ſhould be preſent, or give their 'Suffrage and Conſent by their Epiſtles. And if any thing were 'tranſacted contrary to this, they adjudge ſuch an Ordination 'to have no Force or Efficacy at all †. Upon the whole, when they make one Decree, that a *Chorepiſcopus* ſhall be made by a *ſingle Biſhop*, and at the ſame time reſolve, that a *Biſhop* ſhall not be conſecrated without the Concurrence of *ſeveral other Prelates*; this, I think, will amount to a Demonſtration, that they did not look upon the former of theſe as a real, proper

‖ *Itaq*; *Ordinationem quam Canones irritam definiunt, nos quoq*; *vacandam eſſe cenſuimus. Conc. Regen. cap.* 1.

* *Con.* Antioc. *can.* 10. † μηδὲν ἰσχύειν τὴν χειροτονίαν. *Ib. can.* 19.

per *Biſhop*; to aſſert the contrary, is to ſuppoſe that theſe *Venerable Fathers* did *blow hot* and *cold* in the ſame Breath, and make *contradictory Decrees* in the very ſame Seſſion.

IF all this will not ſatisfy my *Antagoniſt*, he may, if he pleaſes, conſult the two great Biſhops of *Sevil* and *Mayence*, who lived before the *ſuppreſſion* of this *Order*, and both atteſt, That theſe *Chorepiſcopi* were Ordain'd by *one ſingle Biſhop*, juſt as PRESBYTERS ARE *. And having the ſame *Ordination* with *Preſbyters*, they could be *no more* than *Preſbyters*; which was the Thing I undertook to prove.

[3.] MY third *Argument*, to prove, *That the Ancient* Chorepiſcopi *were no more than* Preſbyters, is built upon ſuch *Teſtimonies* of *Fathers* and *Councils*, as do affirm this very thing, either in *expreſs* Terms, or by *direct* and *neceſſary* Conſequence.

1. THE firſt *Teſtimony* I ſhall produce, is as good as a thouſand; 'tis the 8th *Canon* of the Famous *Nicene Council*, in which theſe Fathers determine, That if any of the *Novatian Clergy* would be *reconcil'd* to the *Church*, they ſhould be readily received: That in whatſoever *Town* or *City* there were none but ſuch, they ſhould retain the ſame *Rank* and *Order* in which they were. But if there were a *Catholick Biſhop* in the *City*, he only ſhould poſſeſs the *Epiſcopal* Dignity: And if he did not think fit to *honour* this New Convert with the Name of a *Biſhop*, he is enjoyn'd to provide for him the place of a *Chorepiſcopus*, or a *Presbyter*, that there may not be two *Biſhops* in the ſame *City*. Which is a Demonſtration that they could not look upon a *Chorepiſcopus* as the ſame with a *Biſhop*; for then the Reaſon which they aſſign, and on which they build their Decree, viz. *That there may not be two Biſhops in one City*, would be impertinent and ſilly to the laſt Degree.

2. The ſecond *Witneſs* I ſhall produce to this purpoſe, is St. *Gregory Nazianzen*, who wrote ſeveral Letters to *Theodorus*, Biſhop of *Tyanea*; in one of which he expreſſes himſelf to this Effect: 'As for the *Violences* with which we are 'threatned by the *Apollinarian Hereticks*, you will underſtand 'theſe Things more perfectly from *Eulalius* the *Chorepiſco-*

 'pus,

* *Hi autem* (*ſſ.* Chorepiſcopi) *a ſolo Epiſcopo Civitatis, cui adjacent ordinantur*, Iſid. Hiſp. *de Officiis Eccleſi. l.* 2. *c.* 6. *A ſolo Epiſcopo Civitatis, cui adjacent ordinantur, ſicut Preſbyteri*, *Raba. Maurus de Inſtitu. Cler. l.* 1. *c.* 5.

'*tus*, and *Celeusius*, my FELLOW PRESBYTERS, whom I 'have sent to your *Holiness* for this very purpose *. I take this to be a *Testimony* that will admit of *no Evasion*: Here is the *Person* named, his *Office* described, and he in express Terms declared to be a *Presbyter*. It may perhaps be urged, *That* Nazianzen *was himself a Bishop*. But if this Epistle were written before his Exaltation to that Dignity, the *Objection* instantly vanishes. However, supposing the contrary, yet he, as well as every other *Bishop*, was a *Presbyter*, though every *Presbyter* be not a *Bishop*. If the *Bishop* writes to Mr. *Agate*, or the meanest *Vicar* in the Diocess, he subscribes, *Your Loving Brother*--- But in what Sense? Are they *Brother Bishops*? I trow not: But *Brother Presbyters* they are, the Lesser being still included in the Greater. St. *Peter* stiles himself a *Com-Presbyter*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. which is an Argument, that the Persons to whom he wrote were not *Apostles*. So, when *Nazianzen* calls *Eulalius Fellow-Presbyter*, 'tis an Evidence that he was no *Bishop*. Nor can one Instance be given in Antiquity in which one *Bishop* gives that Diminutive Title to another of the same Order with himself. On the other Hand, 'twas very usual for *Bishops* to call Ordinary *Priests* their *Com-Presbyters*. Thus *Caldonius*, who was himself a Prelate, directed an Epistle to *Cyprian* and his *Com-Presbyters*, dwelling at *Carthage* ‡, and St. *Cyprian* writing another to *Rogatian* and *Numidicus* his *Com-Presbyters*, distinguished them from *Caldonius* and *Herculanus*, to whom he gives the Title of Colleagues in the same Superscription, they being Bishops like himself †. *Eusebius* mentions an Epistle, which *Dionysius*, Bishop of *Alexandria* wrote to his *Fellow Presbyters* of the same Church and City ‖. And to name no more, we have an Epistle written by *Nazianzen* in his Father's Name, in which the good old Bishop stiles St. *Basil*, at that time a meer Priest, his *much esteemed Son and Fellow-Presbyter* ‡. This may be enough to satisfy the Reader that this *Eulalius* was a meer *Priest*, though one of these *Chorepiscopi*, whose Power of *Ordaining* was acknowledged by the Universal Church.

3. MY third *Testimony* is very pregnant, as including in it the Suffrages of a whole Council; 'tis that of *Sevil*, which I refer

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* ωδὲ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων μὲ τῶν συμπρεσβυτέρων μαθήσον, Εὐλαλίς τὸ χαρεπισκόπε, &c. Nazianz. *Ep.* 88.
‡ *Inter Opera* Cypriani, *Ep.* 19. † *Ib. p.* 38. ‖ Euseb. *Hist. Eccles. l.* 7. *c.* 20. ‡ Nazianz. *Ep.* 23.

refer to, in which the Fathers that compoſed it deliver themſelves as follows: 'It has been reported to us (*ſay they*) that 'the moſt Reverend *Agapius*, Biſhop of *Corduba*, hath appointed *Chorepiſcopi* and *Presbyters* (who, according to the *Canons*, are ONE and the SAME THING) who, in the Abſence of the Biſhop, ſhould erect Altars, conſecrate Churches *, and do ſeveral other Things which they proteſt againſt, as contrary to thoſe Conſtitutions which they tho't fit to govern themſelves by. The Reader may take Notice, that this Synod poſitively affirms, that *Chorepiſcopi* and *Presbyters* are *one* and *the ſame thing*; nor can Mr. *Agate* object againſt this Teſtimony, which he himſelf produces upon another Occaſion with a great deal of *Pomp* and *Oſtentation*: Nay, from the Determinations of this very *Synod*, he undertakes to ſhew us, what were the *Thoughts* of the *Primitive Fathers* †. And therefore, I hope this may paſs with him for a *good Authority*.

4. MY fourth Witneſs is *Rabanus Maurus*, a Perſon of as great Renown and Reputation as any in the Age in which he lived. He wrote a Learned Treatiſe concerning the *Inſtitution of Clergymen*, in which we may reaſonably expect to find a true Account of this Matter. In his 5th and 6th Chapters he treats particularly of *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*; of the latter, he aſſirms, that they are conſtituted after the *Similitude of the Seventy Elders*; of the former, that they *ſucceed the Apoſtles*. And ſpeaking of the *Chorepiſcopi*, he poſitively aſſerts, 'That they were after the Example of the Seventy, and or-'dained juſt like *Presbyters* †. So that if this great Man deſerves any Credit, they could not poſſibly be ranked in the Prelatical Order.

5. TO the ſame purpoſe the Council at *Ratisbon* delivers its Opinion, ſpeaking of thoſe Eccleſiaſticks, 'They were not 'Biſhops, (*ſay they*) becauſe not ordain'd by three other Bi-'ſhops, as the *Canons* do enjoyn 'em ‡. And this may be well allowed to be a direct and pregnant Teſtimony.

6. I ſhall conclude my Evidence with the *Epiſtles* commonly aſcribed to *Damaſus*, and *Leo* the Great, who inſiſt largely upon this *Topick*, and vehemently urge, 'That the *Chorepiſ-*

* *Relatum eſt nobis, venerandiſſimum quondam Agapium Cordubenſis Urbis Epiſcopum, frequenter Chorepiſcopos vel Presbyteros deſtinaſſe, qui tamen juxta Canones unum ſunt, &c. Con. Hiſpal. 2. c. 7.* † *Pl. Truth, p. 256.* † *V. Rabanum Maurum de Inſtit. Cler. l. 1. c. 5, 6.* ‡ *Vid. Morinum de Ordinat. pt. 3. Exercit. 4. c. 2.*

'*copi* were meer *Presbyters*: That they were ordained by one 'single *Bishop*, and succeeded the *Seventy Disciples*. Their Words are too tedious to be recited, and therefore the *Latin Reader* may consult them at his leisure †.

THUS have I produced a Cloud of Witnesses (such as liv'd in the same Age with the Persons of whom they write) to prove, that the Ancient *Chorepiscopi*, though they had a Power of conferring *Holy Orders*, were yet no more than *Presbyters*; all which may be enough to satisfy an Impartial Mind, that *Presbyterian Ordination* is no such *Novelty* in the Christian Church, as Mr. *Agate* would fain perswade his *credulous Disciples*.

BEFORE I proceed further, it may not be amiss to consider those Arguments which the Modern Defenders of *Episcopacy* make use of, to prove those *Chorepiscopi* to be real *Bishops*, and invested with the *Episcopal Character*.

1st. 'TIS urg'd in the First Place, *That the very Name imports so much as this amounts to*; *the word* Chorepiscopus *signifies* (they say) *in* Greek *a* Village-Bishop, *and if a* Village-Bishop *then a* Bishop, *though not perhaps attended with a Splendour equal to that of a* City-Bishop. To this I Answer,

1st, THAT Learned Men are not so well agreed about the *Etymology* of the Word, as is supposed in this Objection; the great Cardinal *Bellarmine* supposes, that the *Greek* Word from whence it is derived, signifies not a *Village*, but a *Place*; and that *Chorepiscopus* is as much as to say a *Bishop's Deputy*, or *Substitute* †. Nor is he singular in his Opinion; the two *Prelates* whom I have so often cited, and who lived above a Thousand Years ago, give this Interpretation of the Word, *Chorepiscopi, id est, Vicarii Episcoporum* ‡; which is as much as to say, That they were the Bishops *Surrogates*, or *Vicars*; and in this they are followed by *Justellus*, a Modern Critick of great Note ‖. This *Notion* rather confirms than contradicts the Thing that I have been contending for. But

2dly, LET us suppose that *Chorepiscopus* ought to be translated *Village-Bishop*, we must consider, that as the Signification of a Word is wholly arbitrary, so it is often quite changed by the Addition of another Word with which it is compounded: Thus with us in *England*, the word *Lord* signifies a *No-*

† *Vid. Dama. Ep. apud Binium, Tom.* 1. *pag.* 509. *Leo Ep.* 88. * Bellar. *Disputat. To.* 1. *l.* 1. *c.* 17. *de Clericis.* ‡ Isidor. Hispal. & Rabanus Mau. *in Locis Cit.* ‖ *Notæ in Cod. can. p.* 77.

a *Nobleman*; but if we add to it the word *Land*, every paltry Fellow that ſells a Pot of Ale enjoys the Denomination of *Land-Lord*. And it no more follows that every *Village-Biſhop* amongſt the *Greeks* muſt be a *real Biſhop*, than that every *Land-Lord* here with us muſt be a *real Lord*. Beſides, the Council of *Nice* has intirely cut the Throat of this Objection, by that *Canon* which I have already produced, in which 'tis decreed, 'That if a *Novatian* Biſhop reconcile himſelf to the 'Church, he ſhall have the *Honour* of a *Presbyter*; unleſs the 'Catholick Biſhop think fit to honour him with the *Name of a* 'Biſhop: But if this does not pleaſe him, he ſhall provide for 'his New Convert the Place of a *Chorepiſcopus* ‖. A Demonſtration, that he who poſſeſſed this Office was not then looked upon as honoured with the *Epiſcopal Name*.

2d *Obj.* 'TIS objected further, *That theſe* Chorepiſcopi *muſt be real* Biſhops, *becauſe we find them voting in, and ſubſcribing to ſeveral General and Provincial* Councils; *which none but ſuch are pretended to have done.*

THE Anſwer to this is very eaſy, for this is no more than *Presbyters* themſelves have often done; ſo for Inſtance, *Elpidius* and *Flavianus*, two *Presbyters* of *Antioch* are found ſubſcribing to the Second General Council at *Conſtantinople*; nor can it be pretended, that they acted only as *Deputies* in that Affair, for *Meletius*, the Biſhop of that City, was himſelf preſent, and ſubſcribed his Name in the ſame Roll. So alſo the Names of *Tyrannus*, Preſbyter of *Amorium*, and *Auxanon*, Preſbyter of *Apamea*, are found amongſt the Subſcribers to the ſame *Synod* *. So that no Argument at all can be founded on thoſe Subſcriptions, whatever Weight ſome Men may lay upon 'em.

3d *Obj.* 'TIS urg'd in the Third Place, *That theſe* Chorepiſcopi *had many Priviledges which* Preſbyters *have not: That there is a* manifeſt Diſtinction *put between theſe two, by* Athanaſius *and other Writers*; *Which is an Argument* (ſay they) *that they were not* Preſbyters.

Anſ. ONE would think, that the Gentlemen who urged this did not underſtand the *Conſtitution* of their own Church; Is there not a *manifeſt Diſtinction* betwixt our *Arch-Deacons* and the *Rectors* and *Vicars* which are ſubject to them? Have they

‖ *Con.* Nic. *can.* 8. * *Vid. Binium, Tom.* 1. *pt.* 1. *pag.* 536.

they not an Authority Superior to them, and Priviledges distinct from them? The Author of the *Clergyman's Vade Mecum* tells us, 'That they have a Power, not only to Visit, but 'to Suspend and Excommunicate *. Notwithstanding all which, they are but *Presbyters*, and, according to Mr. *Agate*'s Scheme, have no more Power to Ordain a Minister, than the Fellow that sweeps the Church, or tolls the Bell. Besides, there is as *manifest* a *Distinction* put by Ancient Writers between the *Chorepiscopi* and *Bishops*, as betwixt them and *Presbyters*, particularly by that *Canon* of the *Nicene* Council, which I have already quoted, and to which I refer the Reader: So that if the *Distinct mentioning* of these Ecclesiasticks proves any thing, it is, that they were not proper Bishops, and by Consequence, that the Primitive Church did not look upon Ordination as appropriated to a Prelate by any Divine Warrant; which is the Thing I am contending for.

4th *Obj.* I find it urg'd by a Learned Defender of Episcopacy, *That these* Chorepiscopi *continued but a little time in the Church: That an End was put to 'em by the Council of* Laodicea, *which decreed*, can. 57. That Bishops should be no more made in Villages, but Visitors [περιοδευτὰς] in their stead, That the Persons of whom the Council of *Sevil* speaks were these *Visitors*, and not the *Chorepiscopi* mentioned by the Synods of *Antioch* and *Ancyra*; and he pretends, 'That this '*Laodicean* Canon, made in the Year 364, gave a plain Su- 'persedeas to that Order of the *Chorepiscopi* for the future. To all which I might reply, that this was but a Provincial Synod, that it is supposed by many to be earlier than that Year assign'd for it, and placed by *Binius* before the Councils of *Nice* and *Antioch*. But to wave these Things, I answer,

1st, THAT the Synod of *Laodicea* forbids indeed the fixing of Bishops in Country-Villages; but this does not affect the *Chorepiscopi*, who, according to my Scheme, were only *Presbyters*.

2d, HOWEVER this Gentleman labours under a gross Mistake as to Matter of Fact, when he pretends, That a *Supersedeas was given to this Order of Men by the* Laodicean Canons: For in the Year 451, the Fourth General-Council was held at *Chalcedon*, in which was the greatest Appearance of Prelates that the Christian World ever saw. And there are the Names

* *Vol.* 1. *p.* 58. *Ed.* 3. † *Gipps* Tentam. nov. contin. *pt.* 2. *p.* 54.

Names of ſeveral *Chorepiſcopi* ſubſcribed to this very Council; not only ſo, but the Fathers made this Decree in the ſecond *Canon*, 'That if any Biſhop whatſoever ſhould take Money 'for Ordaining another Biſhop, a *Chorepiſcopus*, a Preſbyter, 'or Deacon, ſuch a Mercenary Wretch ſhould be depoſed from 'his Dignity. So far is it from being true, that an End was put to this Order, by the *Laodicean Synod*, that their Ordination is allow'd of by a General Council, near an Hundred Years afterwards, provided there were no Simoniacal Contract in the caſe. Nor can it be pretended, that the Council ſpake one thing, and mean'd another, having theſe *Viſitors* in their Eye; for when the Emperor *Juſtinian* gave theſe Decrees a *civil Sanction*, he makes a plain Diſtinction between the two Orders: 'We decree, *ſays he*, according to the ſacred *Ca*-'*nons*, (alluding to that juſt now mentioned) that no Biſhop, 'Chorepiſcopus, Viſitor, [περιοδευτὴν] Preſbyters, or Cler-'gyman, give any thing to be Ordain'd *.

IN one word; the Authors flouriſhing in the Fifth Century, ſpeak of theſe *Chorepiſcopi* as Perſons exiſting in their own Days: And ſure their expreſs Teſtimony ought more to be regarded, than the Conjecture of a Modern Author, who was not Born in a Thouſand Years afterwards, and who is ſtrugling hard to ſupport his own *Hypotheſis*.

5th *Obj.* THE laſt, and moſt plauſible Objection againſt what I have offered, is taken from the Tenth *Canon* of the Council of *Antioch*, which begins thus: 'It is thought fit by 'this Holy *Synod*, that thoſe *Chorepiſcopi* which are in Coun-'try Towns and Villages, tho' they may have received the 'Impoſition of the Hands of *Biſhops*, [εἰ καὶ χειροθεσίαν 'εἶεν ἐπισκόπων εἰληφότες] ſhould yet keep within their 'own Bounds, *&c.* Hence 'tis inferred, that theſe Perſons had ſeveral *Biſhops* impoſing Hands upon them, that by this the Epiſcopal Character was convey'd to them, and made 'em real *Biſhops*. To which I reply,

1ſt. 'TIS not ſaid of any Individual *Chorepiſcopus*, that he had the Hands of Biſhops impoſed upon him; but this is affirmed of the *Chorepiſcopi* in the plural Number: Which may be true, tho' this Ceremony were performed but by *one* Biſhop at a time. Thus we may ſay, that our *Engliſh* Preſbyters are Ordained

* Cited by *Juſtellus Notæ in Cod. can. &c. p.* 90.

Ordained by Biſhops; but we may not thence infer, that there is a concurrence of more than One Biſhop at any particular Ordination However,

2d. SUPPOSING that more than one Biſhop did lay their Hands upon a *Chorepiſcopus*, he might be no more than a *Preſbyter* all the while; for though one Biſhop be ſufficient to make a Prieſt, yet there is no *Law*, or *Canon*, which forbids the concurrence of ſeveral in the very ſame Solemnity if they think fit. Thus *Euſebius* tells us, 'That *Origen* was Or-'dained a *Preſbyter*, as he was Travelling thro' *Paleſtine*, re-'ceiving Impoſition of Hands from thoſe Biſhops that hap-'pened to be then at *Cæſarea* *. The main Queſtion there-fore is, Whether theſe *Chorepiſcopi* were firſt *Preſbyters*, and had then an Epiſcopal Character ſuper-added to their former? And this is that which can never be proved.

3d. BUT laſtly, 'tis owned, that there is no General Rule without an Exception: I am ready to allow, that tho' thoſe Officers were uſually ordained by a ſingle Biſhop, and were in Truth meer *Preſbyters*, yet ſome Extraordinary caſes might happen, in which a real Prelate might be obliged to move in a lower Sphere, and act but the part of an inferior common *Clergyman*. As this Council of *Antioch* makes an Honourable Mention of that of *Nice*, and was held but a few Years after; ſo 'tis highly probable, and I think very evident, that this *Canon*, out of which the Objection is taken, has a Relation to the Eighth *Canon* of the *Nicene Synod*, in which 'tis decreed, 'That if a *Novatian* Biſhop would be reconciled to the 'Church, he ſhould ſtill be retained amongſt the *Clergy*, that 'the Epiſcopal Dignity ſhould be reſerved for the *Catholick* 'Biſhop, and that the *Novatian Convert* ſhould have provi-'ded for him the place of a *Chorepiſcopus*, or a *Presbyter*. Now as it may truly be affirmed of theſe *reduced Preſbyters*, that they received Impoſition of Hands from ſeveral Biſhops, and yet this cannot be affirmed of all, or the Generality of o-ther *Preſbyters*, ſo the ſame may be ſaid of the *Chorepiſcopi*, that though ſome few of them might upon this, or the like ac-count, obtain *Epiſcopal Conſecration*; yet it by no means follows. that the Generality of 'em could make ſuch high Pre-tenſions.

TO this we may add, that the manner of introducing the Expreſſion on which this Objection is founded, implies the caſe

* *Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. l. 6. c. 23.*

caſe to be *rare* and *unuſual*; ἐι μὴ, if it ſhould ſo happen, if upon an *extraordinary Occurrence*, as in the caſe of the *Novatian* Penitents, it ſhould ſo chance that One who had received *Impoſition of Hands* from ſeveral *Biſhops*, ſhould now officiate as a *Chorepiſcopus*; Altho' this ſhould be the caſe, however, let ſuch a Perſon keep his Diſtance, obſerve the Rules preſcribed to him, and act in *Subordination* to the City *Biſhop*.

THIS *Interpretation* is fairly conſiſtent both with the *Grammatical Conſtruction* of the Words, and the *Hiſtory* of thoſe Times; Whereas, they that raiſe the Objection, make the *Fathers* of this *Council* contradict themſelves in the very ſame Breath; for if the meaning of the Sentence in *Controverſy* be, that the *Chorepiſcopi* were real *Biſhops*, being conſecrated like others by a *Concurrence* of ſeveral Prelates, this is abſolutely irreconcileable with the latter Clauſe of the ſame *Canon*, in which they decree, 'That a *Chorepiſcopus* ſhall be 'conſtituted by that *ſingle Biſhop* to which he is a Subject. On the contrary, all *Circumſtances* will ſweetly Harmonize, by ſuppoſing this to be the General Rule, tho' there may be in ſome particular Caſes an *exception* to, and *deviation* from it.

I have inſiſted the longer upon theſe *Chorepiſcopi*, becauſe if it be made appear, that theſe *Eccleſiaſticks* were no more than *Preſbyters*, all thoſe *Vainglorious Rants*, which my *Antagoniſt* has made about *the Senſe and Practice of the Church for* 1500 *Years together*, will in a Moment vaniſh. And *Preſbyterian Ordination* will appear to be no ſuch *Novelty* in the *Chriſtian Church*, as he would fain perſwade his *credulous Admirers*. Upon a Review of the whole Matter; there is not *one Ancient Writer* to be found (as far as I can learn) which clearly pronounces theſe *Perſons* to be *real* and *proper Biſhops*. On the other Hand, I have produced ſeveral *Fathers* and *Councils*, which poſitively affirm, *That they ſucceeded the Seventy, and were meer Presbyters*: I muſt therefore leave it to the *Reader's Judgment*, Whether *Probability*, *Conjecture*, and *meer Gueſſes*, are of ſufficient Weight to be laid in the Ballance againſt *poſitive Teſtimony*, and *direct Evidence*.

I ſhall diſmiſs this Subject with this One Remark, That ſuppoſing the *utmoſt* which the *Friends* of *Prelacy* can deſire, that theſe Perſons were real *Biſhops*, though this Inſtance will not then prove the *Validity* of *Preſbyterian Ordination*, yet it enervates the *Force* of the moſt *plauſible Argument* that is, or

can be produced against it. 'Tis urged by our *Episcopal Brethren*, *That in the Primitive Church meer Presbyters were not permitted to Ordain*; whence 'tis inferred, that they never had such an *Inherent Right* or *Power* belonging to their Order. But now this Instance of the *Chorepiscopi* cuts in pieces the very Sinews of this *Argument*; for here were Persons who (tis confess'd) had an *Episcopal Character*, and by Consequence an *undoubted Power* of *Ordination*, and yet the *Exercise* of this *Power* was restrained by *Ecclesiastical Laws* and *Church Canons*: So that *Human Constitutions* are not a Standard by which we are to measure *that Authority* which *Christ* hath conferr'd on *Gospel Ministers*.

MY Third Argument may be thus formed.

Arg. 3. *IF* Presbyters *were allowed in the Primitive Church to Ordain with the Bishops Leave, then they had in the Sense of that Church an Inherent Power of Ordaining.*

BUT Presbyters were thus allowed in the Primitive Church, and therefore in the Sense of that Church they had an Inherent Power of Ordaining.

THE Reason of the *Consequence* is this, because no *Officer* whatsoever, either Sacred or Civil, can Authorize one that is not an *Officer* like himself, to do those Things which are peculiar to his Office. Thus 'tis the Office of a *Justice of Peace* to issue out his Warrants, to commit *Malefactors* to Prison, to keep Sessions, and determine such Causes as shall be legally brought before him; but he cannot Authorize a *Tything-man*, or *Petty-Constable*, to do any of these Things. 'Tis Mr. *Agate*'s Office, as a *Priest* of the *Church of England*, to Preach, and Administer the Sacraments; but he can't give a *Commission* to his *Sexton*, to Baptize an Infant, or celebrate the Communion; for this would make him as much a *Priest* as himself. Just so, if the *Power of Ordination* belongs peculiarly to a *Bishop*, he can by no means Authorize one that is no *Bishop* to perform this part of his Office. But this is a Thing so *plain* and *obvious*, that I am confident no Man of Sense will pretend to contradict it.

WHAT therefore I have to do to make *good* my Argument, is to prove, *That Presbyters were allowed to Ordain by the Primitive Church, with the good liking of their Bishop.* This

appears

appears by the 13th *Canon* of the Council of *Ancyra*, held in the Year of our Lord 314, which runs in these following Words: 'It shall not be allowable for the *Chorepiscopi* to ordain *Presbyters* or *Deacons*, nor yet for the *City Presbyters* 'to do it, without a Permission from the *Bishop* in Writing, '[*when*] in another's *Dioceſs* *. The plain meaning of which is this: That though a Verbal Permission might serve the turn, when officiating in their own Precincts, yet they might not presume to act in another's *Dioceſs*, without a Licenſe under the *Bishop*'s own Hand. Or if we read ἐκάσῃ instead of ἑτέρα, (as *Salmaſius* tells us the moſt Ancient Copies have it †) the meaning will be, that they muſt have a written Licenſe from the *Biſhop*, in whatſoever Dioceſs they took upon them to Ordain.

THESE *Canons* are as Ancient as any of thoſe we can certainly affirm to be the Reſult of a *General* or *Provincial Council*; they bear Date ſeveral Years before thoſe of *Nice*, and were with them taken into the *Code* of the Univerſal Church. They were drawn up in that Age, whileſt the *Preſbyters* retained ſome of their Original Rights and Priviledges.

I know 'tis pretended by our *Jure Divino* Men, *That the Words of this Canon are obſcure and unintelligible*; and therefore the Jeſuite *Petavius* fancies, that there is a Sentence too much ‡; others, that there is a Sentence too little, and that the *Original* muſt be corrected by a *Latin Tranſlation* made ſome Hundreds of Years afterwards. But are they countenanced in this their Conjecture by any Ancient Manuſcript? Not one as far as I can learn. The *Greek* Copies all agree in the uſual Reading; and if Men may aſſume to themſelves a Liberty of ſubſtracting *from*, or adding *to* theſe *Canons*, which do not *countenance* their *Notions*, or *ſupport* their own *Prejudices*: *Fathers* and *Councils* muſt be diſcarded; nothing in Antiquity can be depended on; but all Things will be precarious and uncertain. I can't imagine what ſhould make the

* χωρεπισκόπους μὴ ἐξεῖναι πρεσβυτέρους ἢ διακόνους χειροτονεῖν, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ πρεσβυτέροις πόλεως, χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπιτραπῆναι τοῦτο τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ μετὰ γραμμάτων ἐν ἑτέρᾳ παροικίᾳ; *vel* ἐκάσῃ, *as* Juſtellus *has it in the Margin. Con. Anc. c.* 13.

† *Walo Meſſali. p.* 304. ‡ Petavii *Animadv. in Epipha. Hær.* 69.

fore-mentioned Words so *dark* as is pretended, unless it be that they *obscure* the *Lustre* of *Episcopacy*; or what makes them *unintelligible*, unless it be that some people are unwilling to *understand* that ever *Presbyters* had a *Power of Ordination*; which *Power* is evidently acknowledged by the *Fathers* of this *Synod*, if their Determinations are truly conveyed to us; the which we have no more Reason to doubt of, as far as I can see, than of any other of the same Nature.

NOR let it shock the Reader, because 'tis said, *That Presbyters shall not Ordain without the Bishop's Leave*; For whilest a Bishop was no more than the Pastor of a single Congregation, the other Clergy were but as his Curates; and *Ignatius* tells us, that 'twas not allowed them so much as to *Baptize without the Bishop's Leave* *: Yet no Man doubts but that Presbyters have an Original Power of Baptizing, without depending on a Bishop's License.

WHAT was determined by this Council, seems to have been suggested by St. *Cyprian* some time before. In that Bill of Complaint which he exhibits against *Novatus*, a Presbyter of his own, he lays this to his Charge amongst several other Things: 'This is the Man (*says he*) who ordained one *Felicissimus*, a Partizan of his own, to be a Deacon, without my 'knowledge or *permission* †. So that the thing St. *Cyprian* blames him for, was not his arrogating to himself a *Power* to which he had no Title; but his exercising that *Power* without his Bishop's Leave. Should Mr. *Agate* write his Friend, That at such a time his *Sexton* was so Audacious as to Baptize a Child without his *permission*. This would look very odd and ridiculous, because every person knows that he can give him no such *permission*. And when St. *Cyprian* complains of this person for Ordaining a Deacon without his Leave, 'tis a plain Intimation, that there was nothing but his own Consent wanting, to make the Action regular and authentick.

Arg. 4. THEY who in the Primitive Church had a *Power* of laying on Hands in Ordination, had also a *Power* of Ordaining,

BUT *Presbyters* had then a *Power* of laying on Hands in Ordination.

THEREFORE *Presbyters* had then a *Power* of Ordaining.

THAT

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* Ignat. *Ep. ad* Smirn. † *Nec permittente me, nec Sciente*, Cyp. *Ep.* 49. *ad* Corne.

THAT *Presbyters* did *impose Hands* in this *Solemnity* is evident beyond all Dispute from the Fourth *Council at Carthage*, which determines thus: 'When a *Presbyter* is Ordain'd, 'and the *Bishop* Blesses him, and puts his Hand upon his 'Head, let all the *Presbyters* then present lay on their Hands 'together with the *Bishops* *. This is in Truth no more than what is this Day practised in the *Church of England*. And the retaining of this *Custom*, seems to be a Shadow and Acknowledgment of that *substantial real Power*, which *Presbyters* did formerly enjoy, and which, according to their Original Institution, is a *Right* belonging to their *Order*.

THAT the *Imposition of Hands* infers a *Power of Ordaining*, will, I conceive, appear evident to every one, who considers that this is *that very external Act* and *solemn Rite* by which *Ordination* is perform'd: And therefore, none may concur in the *Act*, but such as have an Influence upon the *Effect* produced by it. This *Rule* will hold *good* in all Transactions of a *sacred* and *civil Nature*. None may *pour Water* on a Child's Face in *Baptism*, but such as have a *Power of Baptizing*: None may administer the usual *Oath* to the *Mayor of a Corporation*, but such as have a *Power* of Inaugurating him into his Office. When several Persons concur in Signing, Sealing and Executing the same *Deed*, 'tis taken for granted, that they have all a *power* to transfer that *Right* or *Title* which is convey'd by it.

IN one Word; I may challenge my *Antagonist* to produce one Instance, in which Persons concur in that *Act* by which a *Right* or *Title*, *Priviledge* or *Authority*, is convey'd, who at the same time have no *power* at all to convey such *Rights* or *Priviledges*. Let him give an Instance, in which Persons transact that very *Solemnity*, by which another is *invested* in an Office, whilest the Persons so transacting have no *Authority* at all to *invest* him with it. And then I shall confess, that something may be offered like an Answer. But if no such Instance can be given in *Church* or *State*, my Argument will remain unshaken, *That because* Presbyters *may lay on Hands in Ordination, they have a Power of Ordaining*.

I know 'tis pretended, *That this is done for the better Grace of the Matter; and that the Action may look more Venerable*. But if this be all, why are not the *Mayor* and *Aldermen*, or the *Deputy-Lieutenants*, and *Justices of the Peace*, desired to impose Hands together with the *Bishop*? For this would

* *Conc.* Carthag. 4. *can.* 3.

would look as Auguſt in the Eyes of the World, and conciliate Reſpect to the Ordained Perſon, as much as when 'tis done by 2 or 3 Ordinary Prieſts.

MY Fifth Argument may be thus formed:

Arg. 5. *If that Difference which there* Now *is between* Biſhops *and* Presbyters *be owing to* Cuſtom *and* Eccleſiaſtical Laws, *then Originally they were the ſame, and had the ſame power of Ordaining.*

But that Difference which there Now *is between* Biſhops *and* Preſbyters, *is owing to* Cuſtom *and* Eccleſiaſtical Laws.

Therefore they were Originally the ſame, &c.

WHAT I have to do to make good this Argument, is to prove the *Minor* Propoſition, That the Aſcendency of Biſhops over the Inferior Clergy, owes its Original to Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions.

1. THE Firſt Witneſs I ſhall produce to this purpoſe, is St. *Jerom*, who for Learning, and Knowledge in Antiquity, was ſecond to none in the Age in which he lived, and who has given us his Sentiments of this Affair in the following words: 'Let 'Biſhops know, *ſays he*, that they are greater than Presby- 'ters, rather by CUSTOM than a Divine Inſtitution*. If it be objected, *That this Father was partial to his own Order*,

2. LET us next hear the Opinion of his dear Friend Saint *Auſtin*, the Famous Biſhop of *Hippo*, who thus expreſſes himſelf in one of his Epiſtles: 'Altho' according to thoſe Titles of 'Honour, which do now obtain by Reaſon of the CUSTOM 'of the CHURCH, the Epiſcopacy is greater than the Presby- 'tery, yet in many Things *Auguſtin* is leſs than *Jerom* †. The Queſtion betwixt me and Mr. *Agate* is this, What is it that renders a *Biſhop* more Great and Honourable than a *Prieſt*? Is it the Inſtitution of *Chriſt Jeſus*, or an *Apoſtolical* Appointment? No! If this Renowned *Father* deſerves any Credit,

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* *Ita Epiſcopi noverint ſe magis Conſuetudine, quam Diſpoſitionis Dominicæ Veritate Presbyteris eſſe Majores.* Hieron. *Comment. in Tit.* 1. 5.

† *Quanquam enim ſecundum Honorum Vocabula, quæ jam Eccleſiæ uſus obtinuit, Epiſcopatus Presbyterio major ſit, &c.* Aug. *Ep.* 19. *ad* Hieron.

Credit, 'tis *usus Ecclesiæ*, the *Custom of the Church*, which has made this vast Distinction between them.

3. MY Third Testimony is what Mr. *Agate* cannot object against, because he has himself produced it with a great deal of Triumph, when he thought it made for his purpose. 'Tis the Second *Council of Sevil*, in which the *Fathers* having spoken of *Ordination*, the *Consecration of Churches*, *Confirmation*, and several other things, 'All these things, *say they*, are for-'bidden Presbyters, by certain *Novels* and *Ecclesiastical Rules*, 'and 'tis injoyned by the Authority of the *Canons*, that none 'but Bishops do these things, that so the Difference of De-'grees, and Dignity of the Chief Priest might be hereby de-'monstrated *. By this 'tis evident, that Prelacy, according to these Venerable Fathers, was founded, (not on the Word of God) but the Authority of *Church Canons*; and that the very End for which they were enacted, was to declare the (*Dignitatis fastigium*) high Dignity of the Pontificate.

I shall conclude my Arguments from Antiquity, by producing some Instances, in which the *power* of *Presbyters* to Ordain has been acknowledged; and begin with the Testimony of *Firmilian*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, who expresly affirms, 'That 'all *Grace* and *Power* is appointed in the Church, where *Se-'niors* preside, who have the *power* of Baptizing, Confirming 'and ORDAINING †. The *Seniors* mentioned by this Father, are the same with *Presbyters*; all the Difference is, that one of these Words has a *Greek*, and the other a *Latin* Original: But the Signification is the very same, as is confessed by every one that understands these Languages. Nor was it an unusual Thing in those Days for *Presbyters* to preside in *Church Assemblies*. Thus *Cyprian* writes to *Cornelius*, Bishop of *Rome*, 'Not doubting but he would cause his Epistle to be 'read to the most flourishing Clergy, who did preside toge-'ther with himself †. Of these *Seniors* 'tis affirmed, in direct Terms, that they have a *power* of *Ordaining*: And what plainer Evidence can be desired.

2*dly*, MY Second Instance is *Cyprian*, who being in Banishment, writes a Letter to his people, acquainting them, 'That 'one

* *Quod solis debere Episcopis, Authoritate Canonum præcipitur, &c. Conc.* Hispal. 2 *can.* 7. † *Ubi præsident Majores natu, qui & Baptizandi, & Manum imponendi, & Ordinandi possident potestatem, apud* Cypr. *Ep.* 75. *pag.* 200. † *Florentissimo illic Clero tecum præsidenti. Ep.* Cypr. 55.

'one *Aurelius*, a Confeſſor, having deſerved a Clerical Or-
'dination, he would have them to know, that this Man was
'Ordain'd by him, and ſuch of his *Colleagues* as were preſent
'with him *. In this Citation 'tis obſervable, that the Or-
dination of this Man is, by St. *Cyprian*, aſcribed to ſuch *Preſ-
byters* as were preſent, and concurred in the Action, and that
in as ample and full a manner as to himſelf. 'Tis not ſaid,
That he *had* their Approbation and Conſent; but 'tis poſitive-
ly affirmed, That *Aurelius* was *Ordained* by them. Nor can
it be pretended that theſe *Colleagues* were real Biſhops; for
'twas never known that a Biſhop would call in the Aſſiſtance
of other Prelates, to ordain ſo mean an Officer as a *Reader* in
the Church. Beſides, 'twas uſual with *Cyprian* to call his
Presbyters his *Colleagues* †. And this was ſo agreeable to the
Language of the *African* Churches, that the Fourth Council
of *Carthage* made a *Canon*, which determines, 'That though
'a Biſhop ſhould ſit above his Presbyters at Church, yet when
'at Home, he ought to look upon himſelf as their COL-
'LEAGUE ‡.

3*dly*, ANOTHER Inſtance we may find in the ſame Father,
which I have already hinted at; 'tis that of *Felicisſimus*, who
was conſtituted a *Deacon* by *Novatus*, a Presbyter of *Car-
thage* ‡. 'Tis true, St. *Cyprian* complains, that this was done
without his Knowledge and Permiſſion; but he no where pre-
tends, that the Act was null and invalid. And tho' this *Feli-
ciſſimus* was Excommunicated for his Adulteries, Tumults,
and many other Crimes; yet I no where find it objected to him,
that he had uſurped the Deacon's Office, or that his Title to it
was Invalid in it ſelf, though irregularly obtained.

4*thly*, I conceive that I may, in the next place, very ſafely
appeal to the Council of *Nice*, as an Evidence for me in the
preſent Controverſy; which eſtabliſhed this Decree amongſt
divers others, that if any of the *Novatian* Clergy would re-
'concile themſelves to the Church, they ſhould be permitted
'to diſcharge their Miniſterial Function ‖. As for the *Nova-
tians*, of whom this *Canon* ſpeaks, they derived their Name
and Original from *Novatian*, a *Roman* Presbyter, who diſa-
greeing with the Biſhop of that City, about receiving thoſe to
the Communion of the Church, who in Times of Perſecution
ha

* *Hunc igitur, fratres dilectiſſimi, a me & a Collegis qui
præſentes aderant, ordinatum Sciatis*, Cyp. *Ep.* 33. † *Ep.* Cyp. 28. *ad Clerum.* ‡ Cyp. *Ep.* 49. ‖ *Conc.* Nicæn. *can.* 8. ‡ *Conc.* Carthag. 4. *can.* 3

had laps'd into *Idolatry*; and being Ambitious of an Higher Title, had Inveigled Two or Three of the most *Ignorant Bishops* in all the Country to come to *Rome:* And when he had shut them up in a House, and made them very Drunk, about Ten of the clock at Night, he constrained them by force to make him a *Bishop*. I would fain know, what can Invalidate an *Ordination* if such a Conduct will not do it? Should three or four Ruffians trepan my Lord *Chancellor*, and force him to affix the Great Seal to a *Patent* which they had provided, I don't think this would be looked upon as a *good* Conveyance, or entitle these Fellows to any thing but the *Gallows*. And the case is much the same in relation to this *Sham Bishop*. And therefore *Eusebius*, who gives us this Account, affirms, 'That 'he received his Episcopacy by a vain and imaginary Imposi-'tion of Hands *. And St. *Cyprian*, who was his Cotempo-'rary, assures us, 'That he could not have either the *honour*, 'or the *power* of a *Bishop* †. Notwithstanding all which, tho' he had but the *Shadow* of *Consecration*, and no *Episcopal power*, yet he was an undoubted *Presbyter*; and the Ordinations derived from him, were allowed to be Valid and Authentick by the renowned Council of *Nice* it self.

5*thly*, A Fifth Witness confirming my Assertion, is *Leo*, surnamed the Great, who flourished in the middle of the Fifth *Century*. We have an Epistle of his written to *Rusticus*, Bishop of *Narbon* in *France*, in which he gives this as his Judgment concerning some, who went up and down the Country, pretending to be *Bishops*, and officiating as such: Though, as he tells us, 'They were neither chosen by the Clergy, nor de-'sired by the People, nor yet consecrated by the Bishops of 'the Province, with the Consent of the Metropolitan. Con-'cerning whom his Holiness determines, that the Dignity 'which was never conferr'd upon them, ought not to be gi-'ven to 'em. But (*says he*) if there be any Clergymen ordained by these Counterfeit Bishops [*Pseudoepiscopis*,] if their proper Bishops will consent unto it, such an *Ordination* may be esteemed *Valid* †. Here is an *Ordination* determined to be Valid, tho' performed by such as could not pretend to an Episcopal Consecration, nor could the Bishops Consent *afterwards* make that Authentick which was *Originally* null and void.

* ἐπινοίᾳ τινὶ καὶ μεταλήᾳ χειροτονίᾳ, Euseb. *Hist. Eccles. l.* 6. *c.* 43. † *Episcopi nec potestatem possit habere nec Honorem*, Cyp. *Ep.* 52. † Leon. *Mag. Ep.* 92.

6thly, THE Sixth Teſtimony which I ſhall produce, is the Council held at *Ries* in *France*, in the Year 439, upon the Account of *Armentarius*, who acted as Biſhop of *Ebredunum*, tho' he was never conſecrated by three Biſhops as the Eccleſiaſtical Laws required. Upon which, the Fathers aſſembled reſolve, that his Conſecration was null, and he no Biſhop; but as for the Miniſters ordained by him, his Succeſſor at *Ebredunum* was left at his Liberty, whether he would retain or diſmiſs them. Perhaps it will be objected, *That this Armentarius* was a real Biſhop, tho' his Admiſſion to his Office was uncanonical. To which I anſwer, That this does not alter the Caſe at all; for whatever he was in *himſelf*, yet in the *Opinion*, *Eſteem* and *Apprehenſion* of this Council, he was no real Prelate. 'They declare his Ordination to be abſolutely Null and Void; nay, that there was nothing at all 'did appear to them which could make him a Biſhop *. I don't ſee how 'tis poſſible for Men to make uſe of Words that are more ſignificative and expreſſive. Notwithſtanding all which, they allow the Perſons ordained by him to officiate as Goſpel Miniſters †; which they would never have done, had they thought a *Biſhops Hand* Eſſential, and abſolutely Neceſſary to the conveying *Holy Orders*.

7thly, ANOTHER Ancient *Author*, who aſſerts the *Validity* of a *Preſbyterian Ordination*, is *Iſidore*, Biſhop of *Seville* in *Spain*. I have already taken Notice of the Second Council of *Seville*, which poſitively affirms, 'That the *Chorepiſcopi* and *Preſbyters* were One and the Same Thing †. St. *Iſidore* was in that time Biſhop of the City, and his Name is firſt upon Record amongſt thoſe who ſubſcribed the Determinations which were then made. The Chriſtian World is alſo Obliged to this great Man for ſeveral Learned *Treatiſes*, which he has left behind him. Amongſt others, we have ſome which treat particularly concerning *Eccleſiaſtical Offices*; in which he allows theſe *Chorepiſcopi* a Power to Ordain *Sub-Deacons* and *Readers* in the Church, and even *Preſbyters* themſelves, provided they have the *Biſhop*'s Leave ‖. I have already proved, that no Licenſe whatſoever could authorize them to do this Act, for it was by the Law of *God* appropriated to an Higher Order of Men. Thus we ſee this Renowned *Prelate*, who was as Famous as any of the Age he lived in, has given it under his Hand, that

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* *Prorſus nihil quod Epiſcopum faceret offenſum eſt*, C. Regen. *cap.* 1. † *Ib. cap.* 3. † *Conc.* Hiſpal. 2.
‖ *De Officiis Eccleſ. l.* 2. c. 6.

the *Chorepiſcopi were meer* Presbyters; and yet has publiſhed his *Opinion* to the whole World, *That the Ordinations made by theſe very Men were Valid and Authentick.*

IN my *Defence*, p. 109, &c. I produced the Teſtimony of St. *Jerom*, who affirms, 'That at *Alexandria*, from the 'Days of St. *Mark* to the Time of *Heraclas* and *Dionyſius*, '(*i. e.* near 200 Years) the *Presbyters* did always name one to 'be their Biſhop, who was choſen from amongſt themſelves, 'and placed in an Higher Degree, juſt as an Army makes a General or Emperor *. To this Teſtimony Mr. *Agate* replies as follows.

1. HE accuſes me of *Acting an unfair part, in leaving out a Sentence to be found in the ſame Epiſtle, what doth a Biſhop which a Presbyter may not do, Ordination excepted*? Hence he ſays, *'Tis as plain as Words can make it, that Presbyters cannot ordain, even in the Opinion of St.* Jerom *himſelf* [Pl. Truth p. 266.] To which I ſubjoin this Anſwer.

THAT theſe two Paſſages in this Epiſtle refer to two vaſtly different Times, and ſo are fairly conſiſtent with one another, and with my Aſſertion. In the *former*, he ſpeaks of the firſt Ages of the Church; in the latter, of that Age in which he lived. He no where inſinuates, as if Preſbyters *never* could Ordain; but owns, *they were not allowed to do it at the time of his writing that Epiſtle*. 'Tis confeſſed by all, That in the Fifth Century, (when this Father flouriſhed) Ordination was generally appropriated to Biſhops: But this was done by Eccleſiaſtical *Laws*, and *Canons* purely Humane; from the Beginning it was not ſo. This is poſitively affirmed by St. *Jerom* in the preceding part of this Epiſtle. 'By the words of 'St. *Paul*, (*ſays he*) 'tis manifeſtly proved, that a Biſhop is 'the very ſame with a Preſbyter †. And he is very large in inſiſting on this Topick. But now if one had a vaſtly greater Power than the other, if one were a *Ruler* and the other *Ruled*, one a *Prince* and the other a *Subject*, how could they poſſibly be the ſame? So that the Caſe, as St. *Jerom* repreſents it, was plainly this: At firſt, Biſhops and Preſbyters were the ſame, this Method continued in the Church for ſome time, particularly at *Alexandria*; but when this Father wrote, (*i. e.* ſome Hundreds of Years afterwards) the Caſe was altered, and Presbyters were not permitted to Ordain.

* *Hieron. Ep. ad Evag.* † *Manifeſtiſſime comprobatur eundem eſſe Epiſcopum atq; Presbyterum.* Ib.

Mr. *Agate* further objects, [*p.* 267.] *That all that St.* Jerom *means was, that the* Alexandrian *Bishops were not chosen out of the Order of Deacons, but from amongst the* Presbyters. That *they were elected out of that particular Body of* Presbyters *that lived at* Alexandria, *and not from amongst the* Presbyters of the whole Province. He concludes representing it as *a monstrous thing that* Presbyters *should Ordain the Great Patriarch of* Alexandria. To all which I reply:

THAT in the Time of which St. *Jerom* speaks, these Pompous Titles of *Patriarchs* and *Primates* were utterly unknown, but owe their Original to the *Policy* of succeeding Ages: Nor is it supposed by us, that this *Alexandrian Bishop* had any *New Ordination* conferr'd upon him. But it seems evident, from the *Relation* which this Learned Father gives us of the Matter, that these *Presbyters* chose One of their *own Body* to be, as it were, the Mouth of their Assembly, and to preside in all Debates, and him they called *their Bishop*. Just as the *Justices of the Peace* place one of their Members in the Chair, who is to regulate all *Proceedings*, and deliver the Sense of the *Court*; and this Gentleman is call'd *Judge of the Sessions*; tho' the *Queen*'s *Commission* gives no more *Authority* to him, than to any of his Brethren. Thus the *Alexandrian Bishop*, of whom we are speaking, had no manner of *Power* and *Jurisdiction*, but what the *Presbyters* themselves gave him. They *chose* the *Man*, they *placed him* in an *Higher Degree*, and *gave him his Name*; And what could any other Persons do more? This is further evident by that Example which St. *Jerom* makes use of to Illustrate this Affair; He resembles this Action of the *Presbyters* to an *Army*'s making an *Emperor*. Now if Mr. *Agate* knows any thing of the *Roman History*, he must acknowledge, that when their *Victorious Legions* had a Fancy to make such a Man their *Emperor*, they did it without waiting for the Concurrence of any other Power; nor did the Person so chosen expect the *Approbation* of the *Senate*, but held the Empire by the same Title by which he got it, which was the *Power of the Sword*. Just thus (if this Learned Father deserves any Credit) the *Presbyters* of *Alexandria* made their own *Bishop*: And by Consequence, his *Consecration* by other *Bishops*, could not be then thought Necessary; nor can these *Gentlemen*, who pretend the contrary, produce *one Testimony*, that ever I saw, to *support* their Conjecture.

Mr.

Mr. *Agate* indeed pretends, that all St. *Jerom* means was, *That the* Presbyters *of* Alexandria *chose their own Bishops, and that out of their own Body; not from the Inferior Order of Deacons, nor from the Presbyters of another City* [p. 267.] But this is a Comment which is inconsistent with the Text; in which 'tis plainly intimated, that the *custom* of which it speaks, remained no longer than the Days of *Heraclas* and *Dionysius*. Whereas Presbyters continued to choose their Bishops throughout the Christian World for many Ages afterwards; nor have we clearer Footsteps of it any where than in this very City of *Alexandria*. 'Thus *Athanasius* was importunately desired 'by the whole multitude of Christians inhabiting that Famous 'City to be their Bishop *. And after his Decease, one *Peter* was chosen by the *unanimous Suffrages both of the* Magistracy *and* Clergy †. And as the Presbyters were concerned in choosing their Bishop, so were they obliged to *choose him out of their own Body*. And this continued for Scores of Years after the period mentioned by this Learned Father. The Translation of *Bishops* from one *Dioceſs* to another, is very strictly forbidden by *Canons* commonly called *Apostolical* †, by the *Council of Nice* ‡, and many other *Synods*. And when *Eusebius* of *Nicomedia*, the Famous Patron of the *Arians*, attempted a *Remove* from his *own See* to that of *Constantinople*, *Theodorit* exclaims against him for such an *Innovation* ‖. When *Bishops* lay under such a *Restraint*, we may very well suppose that the *Inferior Orders* were not allowed a greater *Liberty*; and therefore, *Priests* and *Deacons* are, in the *Canons* just now mentioned, *forbidden* to *Remove* from one *City* to another. And the great *Council of Chalcedon* decrees, 'That they shall Offi-'ciate only in that Church in which they were Ordained (*).

THIS is enough to satisfy an *Impartial Reader*, that what Mr. *Agate* has advanced concerning the *Alexandrian Presbyters*, and their advancing *Priests* of *other Cities* to be their *Bishops*, is a *groundless Fancy* and *Conjecture*, inconsistent with that *Church Discipline* which did then prevail; nor can he give one Instance of their *ransacking a whole Province upon such an Occasion*. In Opposition, therefore, to the *Interpretation* which has been given, I may thus fairly argue, That *Custom*, of which St. *Jerom* speaks, continued only 'till the Days

* Athanasii *Apol.* 2. *p.* 726. † Theodor. *Hist Eccles.* l. 4. *c.* 20. † *Can.* 13. ‡ *Can.* 15. ‖ *Hist. Eccles. l.* 1. *c.* 19. (*) *Conc.* Chalced. *c.* 10.

Days of *Heraclas* and *Dionysius*; but the *Custom* of *Presbyters chusing a Bishop from amongst themselves*, continued many Ages after: Therefore, this could not be the *Custom* of which St. *Jerom* speaks.

BESIDES, whoever reads this *Epistle*, must needs perceive, that the very *End* and *Reason* for which this Instance of *Alexandria* is produced, is to prove, that *Bishops* and *Presbyters* were Originally the *same*. But if nothing else be intended by it, but that *Presbyters chose their Bishop*, this will not answer his Design, nor prove the Thing for which it is produced.

TO conclude; St. *Jerom* declares it to be Matter of Fact, *That the* Alexandrian Presbyters *did, for some Scores of Years, make their own* Bishop. Nor is he contradicted in this *Relation* by any Ancient Historian. Hence I infer, That they who made a *Bishop* could make a *Priest*; and that these two were not then look'd upon as Persons of a *distinct Order*; nor have the *Quibbles* and *Distinctions*, made use of by Mr. *Agate*, any Weight at all to *overthrow* this Argument.

IF Enquiry be made concerning the *Sentiments* of those Eminent Writers who flourished in the succeeding Ages of the *Church*, we shall find Abundance of the *Fathers* and *Schoolmen* embracing the *Opinion* of St. *Jerom*, concerning the *Identity* of *Bishop* and *Presbyter*. 'Twould be tedious for me to recount all their *Expressions*; the *Reader*, who desires Satisfaction, may consult *Morinus*, who, tho' a *Papist*, was yet a Learned and Ingenuous Author *. Nay, the *Jus Divinum* of *Episcopacy*, is a Doctrine that has not long been current amongst the *Papists* themselves. The *Trent Catechism* lays down this *Position*, 'That the Sacerdotal Order, [which 'comprehends both *Bishops* and *Presbyters*,] is BUT ONE; 'tho' it has various Degrees of Dignity and Power in it †. And the *Fathers* of that *Council* would not allow that the Superiority of *Bishops* should be founded on a *Divine Right* ‡.

BEFORE I dismiss this Topick of Antiquity, 'tis requisite that I take some further Notice of that celebrated Instance of *Ischyras*, so often objected to us, who was deposed by a *Synod* at *Alexandria*, because Ordained by a meer *Presbyter*; whose Story is as follows.

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* *V.* Morini *de sacris Ordinat. pt.* 3. *Exercit.* 3. *c.* 2.
† *Catechis. ad Parochos. p.* 363. ‡ *Hist. Conc.* Trident. *p. mihi* 501.

Athanaſius had appeared with ſo much Zeal and Vigour againſt the *Arians*, that the whole Party were exceedingly enraged againſt him. The principal *Patron* of that *Faction* was *Euſebius*, Biſhop of *Nicomedia*, an Intriguing Cunning Man, and a Great Courtier. Whether *Iſchyras* was Influenced by him, or prompted by his own *Ambition* and *Revenge*, I cannot determine: But ſo it was, that this Perſon accuſed *Athanaſius* of many Horrible and Outragious Crimes; which his Enemies at Court did not fail of improving to his great Diſadvantage. That the *Emperor* might be ſatisfied of the *Innocence*, or *Guilt*, of this topping *Patriarch*, who had ſuch an Influence on Church Affairs, he cauſed an *Aſſembly of Biſhops* to meet at *Tyre*, where *Athanaſius*, by the Artifices and unfair Dealing of his Adverſaries was Condemned, and a little after ſent into Baniſhment by *Conſtantine the Great*. Upon the Death of that Emperor, he returned to his own *See*, and was acquitted by a *Synod* of *Neighbouring Prelates*, conven'd at *Alexandria*. This *Council* paſſed a Cenſure upon *Iſchyras* his Accuſer, adjudging him to be *no Prieſt*, becauſe Ordained by *Coluthus*, a *Presbyter* but *no Biſhop*. Mr. *Agate* indeed talks of Four Synods called about this Matter [*p.* 256.]; but the truth on't is, there was never one Synod called on purpoſe to determine of the *Validity* or *Invalidity* of *Iſchyras* his Ordination. But to judge of the *Truth* or *Falſhood* of his Accuſations. *Athanaſius* had not been long at *Alexandria*, before he was driven thence a ſecond time, and forced to fly for Protection to *Rome*, where he was kindly received by Pope *Julius*, and pronounced *Innocent* by a *Council of Biſhops*, which he conven'd on that Occaſion. Things ſtood in this Poſture 'till the Year 347, when the Emperors ſummoned both the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern Biſhops* to meet at *Sardica*, in Order to put a final Determination to this Affair; when they came there, the *Eaſtern Prelates* refuſed to aſſiſt at the *Council*, unleſs *Athanaſius*, whom they had depoſed, ſhould appear as a Criminal, and not ſit as a Judge. And when the others would not agree to this Condition, they withdrew to *Philippopolis*, whence they ſent abroad their circular Letters, moſt bitterly exclaiming againſt *Athanaſius*, and all his *Partizans*. On the other hand, the *Biſhops* from the *Weſt*, to the number of about an Hundred, (as *Dupin* computes them *) remained at *Sardica*, and wrote a *Synodal* Epiſtle in his Vindication: In this Epiſtle they ſtile *Iſchyras A Man full of all Wicked-*

* Dupin's *Eccleſ. Hiſt. Vol.* 2. *p.* 259.

Wickedneſs, (not becauſe he was Ordained by a meer Preſbyter, as is unfairly Inſinuated in a late *Viſitation Sermon* ‡) but becauſe he had forged a groſs Lye, in affirming, *That* Athanaſius *had burnt the ſacred Volumes*; for theſe are the very Words of the *Council* †. As to the Pretences made by *Iſchyras* to *Holy Orders*, the Synod declares, 'That they were well aſſu-'red by two *Egyptian* Prieſts, that he never was a Preſbyter, and 'that *Meletius* had never a *Church* or *Miniſter* in *Mareotes*, 'the Place of his Abode. But, in this Epiſtle, there is nothing ſaid of *Colluthus*: So that, in all probability, this Council apprehended, that he never was Ordained either by *Preſbyter* or *Biſhop*. However, 'tis own'd, that the *Synod* of *Alexandria* pronounced him a meer Layman, for the Reaſon already mentioned. And to this Inſtance I reply,

1. THAT this was but a *Provincial Synod*, and that the ſenſe of the *Catholick Church* cannot be inferr'd from a few Biſhops met together in a Corner of the World. Beſides, tho' he was condemned for an Uſurping Layman, by the *Alexandrian Biſhops*, he was allowed to paſs for a *Prieſt* by the Biſhops aſſembled at *Tyre*; for when *Athanaſius* excepted againſt him as no *Preſbyter*, tho' he went under that denomination in the Libel which he had exhibited to the Council: 'The *Hiſtorian* tells us, that his Judges had no regard at all to this exception *. An evidence that theſe Fathers look'd upon him as a Man in Holy Orders. Nay, the Prelates of *Euſebius* his Faction, were ſo far from degrading him amongſt the *Laymen*, that they advanced him to a *Biſhoprick*, and gave him an Epiſcopal Conſecration †. Which argues him to be a *Prieſt* in their Opinion, when they confer'd an higher Dignity upon him: So that whoever gave this Perſon his Ordination, it was approv'd by the *Eaſtern Biſhops* though *condemned* by ſuch as dwelt in the *Weſt*. I appeal to any Impartial Reader, whether our Brethren of the *Epiſcopal perſwaſion* have any reaſon to lay ſo great a ſtreſs upon this Perſon, concerning whom the Chriſtian World was ſo very much divided. Nay, this Inſtance may ſerve my purpoſe as well as Mr. *Agates*; I may argue that *Preſbyterian Ordination* is valid, becauſe *Iſchyras* was ordain'd by a *Preſbyter*, and yet own'd for a Prieſt by the Council of *Tyre*, conſiſting of about 60 Venerable Fathers, and ſummon'd

‡ Robert's *Viſit. Serm. p.* 23. † Theodor. *Eccleſ. Hiſt. l.* 2. *c.* 8. * Socrat. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 1. *c.* 31. † Theodor. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 2. *c.* 8. Athan. *Apol.* 2.

mon'd by the expreſs command of the Renowned *Conſtantine* the Great.

NOR will it avail much to object that thoſe *Biſhops* were *Arians*, for ſuppoſing that they were Heterodox in their *Doctrine*, it by no means follows, that they muſt be more miſtaken in the *Churches Diſcipline*, than others of their Brethren. But this *Objection* vaniſhes, when we conſider, that the Generality of this *Council* were not infected with the *Errors* of theſe Men; for they wrote a Synodal Epiſtle to the Church of *Alexandria*, acquainting them, 'They had received *Arius* to their Commu-'nion, becauſe he had Repented of his *Error*, and acknow-'ledg'd the *Truth* *. A Demonſtration, that they *had not* embraced his *Hereſies*; for they would not then have exacted a *Repentance* of him. If they were deluded by the *Sophiſtry* and *Equivocations* of that *impoſtor*, ſo alſo was *Conſtantine* the Great; and ſo might the Beſt and Wiſeſt Men on Earth, for *God* alone can know the Heart.

NOR is it true in Matter of Fact, that all the other Enemies of *Athanaſius* had imbib'd the Hereſy of *Arius*: Thoſe *Eaſtern Prelates* which aſſembled at *Philippopolis*, have left us a *Creed*, to which they ſubſcribed, in which they profeſs 'their Belief in *Jeſus Chriſt*, the only begotten Son of God, 'begotten of the Father before all Ages, God of God, and 'Light of Light, by whom all Things were made, *&c.* And they condemn all thoſe who ſay, There was a Time when this *Son of God* was not †. Whereas the *Grand Error* of the *Arians* lay in this Maxim, ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, *There was a Time when the Son of God had no Exiſtence*; and yet theſe Prelates wrote a *Synodal Letter*, full of *violent Invectives* againſt *Athanaſius*, repreſenting him as guilty of Sacriledge, Murder, and the moſt Deteſtable Enormities ‡. How far they were impoſed upon by others in this hard Cenſure, or gave way to their own Prejudices and Animoſities, 'tis none of my Buſineſs to enquire. All that I inſiſt upon is this, That though *Iſchyras* was pronounced a *Layman* by ſome *Biſhops*, there were others who own'd him for a *Prieſt*, and made him a *Prelate*: And for ought appears to the contrary, the Number of thoſe that did *acquit* him, was as Conſiderable as of thoſe that did *condemn* him.

2. I muſt, in the next place, more largely inſiſt upon what I formerly hinted at in my *Defence*, *viz.* That *Ordinations*, in

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* Socrat. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 1. *c.* 33. ‡ *V. apud Binium. Tom.* 1. *p.* 450. † *Ib.*

their own Nature *valid*, have been frequently declared *null* and *void*, becauſe the *Cuſtoms*, at that time prevailing in the Church, were not obſerved, nor thoſe *Conſtitutions*, which were the Reſult of meer *Humane Prudence* and *Authority* complied with. So that had *Iſchyras* been degraded by the *whole Chriſtian World*, all that can be thence inferr'd amounts to no more than this, That his *Ordination* was not agreeable to thoſe *Canons* by which the Church, at that Time, thought fit to govern it ſelf. Nor can the *Original Right* of *Presbyters* be judged of by ſuch a *Determination*. I concluded this *Obſervation* by producing divers Inſtances, in which *Clergymen* were depoſed for *putting Money to Uſe*, and for their *Non-Compliance* with ſeveral other *Eccleſiaſtical Canons*, which were far from having a *Divine Authority* ſtamp'd upon them.

TO this Mr. *Agate* replies, confeſſing, *That if I can Inſtance in any ſuch Canon to which the Ordination of* Iſchyras *was contrary, it will be a Point gained* [p. 257, 258.]

IT might juſtly be expected, that One who pretends to know the *Senſe of the Univerſal Church for* 1500 *Years together*, ſhould not be to Seek for ſuch a *Canon*; but ſince 'tis ſo, I ſhall, at preſent, deſire him to conſult the Second of thoſe *Canons*, commonly called *Apoſtolical*; which determines that a *Presbyter*, or *Deacon*, ſhall be Ordained by *one Biſhop*. Now if *Iſchyras* was Ordained by a *Presbyter*, this *Canon* was tranſgreſſed, which might occaſion his *Degradation*: And if Mr. *Agate* will ſtand to his own Conceſſion, by producing this Inſtance I have *gained my Point*.

'TIS further urged by this *Gentleman, That I am miſtaken in my Notion of Degrading and Depoſing: That thoſe Clerks who received their Ordination irregularly, were not Degraded ſo as to become Laymen; but were only Suſpended*, ab Officio, *for ſome Time* [p. 259.]

BUT to ſhow the Inſufficiency of this *Quibble*, I ſhall preſent the Reader with Inſtances of *Ordinations* performed by *Biſhops themſelves*, and therefore confeſſedly *valid* in their own Nature, which yet have been adjudged to be abſolutely *null*, for their real or ſuppoſed *Irregularity*, and for their *Nonconformity* to ſuch Conſtitutions as were purely *Humane*. Thus the Council of *Nice* decrees, 'That if a Biſhop ordains a 'Clerk belonging to another Diocеſs, without the Conſent of 'his own Biſhop, ſuch an Ordination ſhall be Null (*). The Council

(*) ἀκυρος ἔστω ἡ χειροτονία, *Can.* 16. *Con.* Nic.

Council of *Sardica* (at which, according to Mr. *Agate*'s Computation, there were 300 *Biſhops* preſent) decreed, 'That if 'a Biſhop conſtitutes a Clergyman, tho' of the moſt Inferior 'Degree, in another Biſhops Precincts, and without his Leave, 'ſuch an Ordination ſhall be Null, and of no Force (*). And the Synod of *Antioch* determines, 'That all Things of this 'Nature tranſacted by a diſorderly Prelate, ſhall be Void and 'Null (†). Nor were the *Greeks* ſingular in this Matter; the *Latin* Church chimed-in exactly with them: And the Second Council of *Arles* decreed, 'That if any Perſon, leaving his 'own Church and reſiding in another, ſhould have Holy Or-'ders conferred upon him by the Biſhop of that place in which 'he had taken up his Abode, without the Conſent of his own 'Dioceſan, ſuch Ordination ſhould be eſteemed a meer Nulli-'ty (†). I would fain learn of my *Oppoſer*, in what *Lexicon* or *Dictionary* the Words made uſe of by thoſe Councils do ſignify no more than a *Suſpenſion*? Or whether any Words can be found out more expreſſive of an abſolute *Nullity* in the *whole Tranſaction*? This may be enough to ſatisfy the Reader, that Mr. *Agate* has not the leaſt Pretence of *Reaſon* to conclude, *That thoſe* Clerks *which received their Ordination irregularly, were not ſo Degraded as to become Laymen.* For what is there but *Ordination* which puts a Difference betwixt the *Clergy* and the *Laity*? And if this be *null* and *void*, the Perſons receiving it are juſt as they were before, that is *meer Laymen.*

LEST it ſhould be objected, *That theſe Eccleſiaſtical Laws were never executed*; I ſhall next preſent the Reader with ſeveral Inſtances of Perſons ordained by *real* and *confeſs'd Biſhops*, and yet their *Ordinations* declared *null*, and they rank'd amongſt *meer Laymen*; becauſe the Rules and Cuſtoms at that Time prevailing in the Church, were not obſerved by them. Of this we have a very Remarkable Inſtance in the *Meletian* Clergy. 'Tis not conſiſtent with the intended *Brevity* of this *Treatiſe*, to *confound* the Reader with the different Accounts given us of this *Meletius* by *Epiphanius* on the one hand, and *Athanaſius* on the other: Let it ſuffice, at preſent, to obſerve, that he is affirmed. by both theſe Authors, to be an *Egyptian Biſhop*,

(*) ἄκυρος ἢ ἀβέβαιος, &c. *Can.* 15. *Con.* Sardic.

(†) ἄκυρα μὲν τὰ ὑπ' αὐτὸ πεπραγμένα, *Can.* 13. *Con.* Antioc. (†) *Hujuſmodi Ordinatio irrita habeatur. Con.* Arelat. *Can.* 13.

of great Note and Eminence (‡). Upon ſome *Miſunderſtanding* betwixt Him and the Patriarch of *Alexandria*, this Prelate, to encreaſe the Number of his *Faction*, made Prieſts in the Precincts of other Men, and was guilty of ſeveral other Irregularities. When the Council of *Nice* aſſembled, they took this Affair into their Conſideration, and reſolved, amongſt other things, *That this* Meletius *ſhould have his Wings clipt, and his Epiſcopal Power circumſcribed, for the future, within a narrower compaſs.* As for the Prieſts which had been conſtituted by him, the *Synod* conſents, *That they be received to the Communion of the Church, being confirmed by a more ſacred Ordination* (*). I look upon this as a Demonſtration, that theſe *Fathers* took their *Irregular Ordination* to be *null*, and themſelves to be *meer Laymen.* Had their *firſt* Ordination been *valid*, they would never have enjoyn'd them a *ſecond.* Here we ſee a great *Body of Men* receiving *Orders* from One, who was undoubtedly a *Biſhop*, and who (if there be any ſuch thing as *Apoſtolical Succeſſion* could make as High Pretences to it as any perſon living; who yet were treated by the Church as a Company of *Laymen*, becauſe of their *diſorderly* and *uncanonical Admiſſion* to the ſacred Office; which is as much as can be affirmed of *Iſchyras* himſelf.

THE next Inſtance of this Nature I ſhall preſent the Reader with, is that of thoſe *Clerks* who were Ordained by *Maximus*, ſurnamed the *Cynick.* The Ambitious Patriarch of *Alexandria*, being willing to have a Friend of his own at *Court*, or influenced by other *ſordid Motives*, prevailed with ſome *Egyptian Biſhops* to conſecrate this *Maximus* Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*, in Oppoſition to the Famous *Nazianzen*, who then poſſeſſed that *Dignity* (†). Though this New Prelate was not able to carry his point, yet he proceeded ſo far as to Ordain *Prieſts* and *Deacons* of his *own Faction.* And having had himſelf an *Epiſcopal Conſecration*, he muſt be Inveſted with ſuch a Power, our *Adverſaries* themſelves being Judges. About this time the *Second General Council* was aſſembled at *Conſtantinople*, where they came to this *Reſolution* concerning the *Intruder*: 'That *Maximus*, for his Irregularities 'committed in that City, ſhould not be taken for a *Biſhop*, 'nor the Perſons Ordained by him be reckoned amongſt the 'Clergy;

(‡) Athanaſ. *Apol.* 2. *p.* 777. Epiphan. *Hæreſ.* 68.

(*) μυριαχοτέρα χειροτονία βεβαιωθέντας, Theodor. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 1. *c.* 6. (†) Sozom. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 7. *c.* 9. *Vid. etiam* Nazianz. *Vitam a* Gregorio *Presbyt. conſcriptam.*

'Clergy; but that all things done by him ſhould be abſolutely 'Null, and of *no Force* (*). Thus we have the two Firſt General Councils adjudging the *Ordinations* made by *real* and *confeſſed Biſhops* to be *Null*, and of *no Force*, purely becauſe they were *uncanonical*. And therefore, all that can be certainly concluded from the Caſe of *Iſchyras* is this, that he was not Ordained purſuant to *thoſe Rites* and *Canons* which at that time prevailed in the Church.

AS the *Ordinations of Prieſts* have been adjudged *Null*, ſo alſo have the *Conſecrations of Biſhops*, and that for no other Reaſon but becauſe they were *uncanonical*. The Council of *Nice* decreed, 'That if any Perſon be made a Biſhop without 'the Conſent of his *Metropolitan*, he ought not to be a Bi'ſhop †. The Synod of *Antioch* hath determined, 'That ſuch 'an Ordination [μηδὲν ἰσχύειν] is of no Force or Efficacy †. And that of *Arles* ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe ‖. 'It belonged 'to the *Archbiſhop* or *Metropolitan* (ſays Dr. *Cave*) either to 'Ordain, or to Ratify the *Elections* and *Ordinations* of all the '*Biſhops* within his Province, inſomuch that, without his 'Confirmation, they were looked upon as *null* and *void* ‡. 'Tis the prevailing *Opinion* of our *Epiſcopal Brethren*, that *Biſhops* are *Succeſſors* to the *Apoſtles*, and by conſequence there can be *none* Superior to them in the *Government* of the Church by a Divine Appointment. 'Tis alſo generally confeſs'd that *Archbiſhops* derive their Juriſdiction from *Eccleſiaſtical Laws*, and the *Conſent of Churches*. And yet the Acts of thoſe Officers who are ſuppoſed to be of a *Divine Appointment*, are made to depend, for their Validity, upon the Conſent of ſuch Officers whoſe Inſtitution is *purely Humane*. This is the conſideration which will eaſily ſolve the moſt material Objections that are, or may be brought againſt the Validity of a *Preſbyterian Ordination*. It is confeſſed that *Biſhops* have an Original, inherent Right of continuing their own Succeſſion, and conſecrating other *Biſhops*. Notwithſtanding all this, ſuch Conſecrations have been declared Null, when performed without the conſent of (an Officer of their own making, call'd) an *Archbiſhop*. Juſt thus, though *Preſbyters* have an inherent Power of Ordaining other *Preſbyters*, yet ſuch Ordinations have

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(*) πάντων παρ' αὐτῷ γενομένων ἀνωχθέντων, *Con.* Conſtant. *can.* 4. † *Con.* Nicæ. *can.* 6. † *Con.* Antioch. *can.* 19. ‖ *Con.* Arel. *can.* 6. ‡ *Primitive Chriſtianity*, *pt.* 1. *p.* 225.

have been sometimes declared void, because done without the concurrence of a *Prelate*. The truth of it is, these two Cases are parallel, and whensoever Mr. *Agate* will shew me the time when, and the means by which, the Metropolitans obtain'd a *Negative Vote* upon other *Bishops*, I will demonstrate the same concerning the Jurisdiction which these have assumed over *Presbyters*.

THUS have I endeavoured to prove the *Validity* of *Presbyterian Ordination*, in which attempt, I have not only pleaded the *Cause of the Dissenters* at Home, but of all the *Protestant Churches* beyond the Seas, not one excepted. The truth on't is, the absolute *Nullity* of such an *Ordination*, is a Doctrine abhor'd by our first *Reforming Bishops*; a Notion introduced by the *Laudean Faction*, and chiefly supported at this very time, by Dr. *Hicks* and Mr. *Lesly*, who are the Heads and Oracles of the *Non-jurant Clergy*. Whereas should *Ridley*, *Hooper*, *Jewel*, with the rest of that *Noble Army* of *Confessors* and *Martyrs* arise from the Dust, they would disown these furious *Levites*, who by their narrow and uncharitable Principles, gratify the *Roman Catholicks*, and Condemn and Un-church two parts in three of the whole *Reformation*. I might demonstrate to the Reader, how our Modern *Hot-spurs* are degenerated from the *Charity* and *Temper* of their *Renowned Predecessors*, the *Fathers* and *Founders* of their own Church. But I shall refer the Reader for satisfaction in these particulars to *Stillingfleet*'s *Irenicum*, *Owen*'s Plea *for Scripture Ordination*, and Mr. *England* against *Lacy*: Where he may find *Cranmer*, *Jewel*, *Whitaker*, *Bilson*, with others of our most Eminent *Reformers*, acknowledging the *Validity* of the *Presbyterian Ordination*, and Confessing *Episcopacy* to be only a *prudential Constitution*. Omitting therefore such Testimonies as those, I shall relate a few Matters of Fact, which seem more fully to express the Sense of the *Church of England* on these Heads.

IN the Reign of K. *Edward* VI. several *German* Divines were invited over into *England*, to assist in carrying on the *Reformation*; of which number *Paulus Fagius* was one. I find that this Learned Man was Ordained in *Germany* after his Marriage *, and by consequence not by a *popish Bishop*; for then he must have vowed a single Life. Nor can we suppose it done by a *protestant Bishop*, where none of that Character were to be found: However, his *Presbyterian Ordination* was so far

* Adamus *in Vit.* Fagii.

far from hindring his *Reception* in *England*, that he was made the KING's *Hebrew Professor* in the Famous University of *Cambridge* *. When Q. *Elizabeth* had re-established the *Protestant Religion* in this Kingdom, Mr. *Travers*, who was Ordained by a *Company of Presbyters* at *Antwerp* ‡, was yet admitted a *Lecturer* in the *Temple* for several Years together, where he had the greatest Lawyers in the Kingdom for his Auditors and Admirers. And though his clashing with Mr. *Hooker* in some doctrinal Points occasioned his Silencing here, he was invited over to *Ireland* by the Archbishop of *Dublin*, who made him *Provost* of *Trinity-Colledge* in that City †. Nay, we are informed by a *Gentleman*, whose Skill in the *Records* of the *Kingdom* was unexceptionable, 'That one or two of 'these Refugees, who, during the *Marian* Persecution, had 'been Ordained by *Presbyters beyond the Seas*, were made Bi-'shops in the Reign of Q. *Elizabeth*, without any previous *E-'piscopal Ordination* ‡.

UPON K. *James* the First his Accession to the *English Throne*, those *Canons* were compiled by the Two *Houses of Convocation*, to which Mr. *Agate* and his Brethren do *now* swear Obedience. The 55th enjoys them, , To pray in an E-'special Manner for the Churches of ENGLAND, SCOT-'LAND, and IRELAND. The Church of *Scotland*, at that time, was *Presbyterian*, as it is now; and yet all the Clergy in *England* then were, and still are, obliged to pray for it as a *true Sister Church*. An Argument that the Reverend Compilers of these *Canons*, did not look upon *Prelacy* as absolutely Necessary to the *Being* of a Church; and that they were Strangers to those *High-flown Notions* which *Intoxicate* our *Modern Zealots*. Though I have taken Notice of this in a former Treatise, I hope the Reader will pardon my *Repetition* of it in this place.

IN 1604, Dr. *Laud* performed his Exercise for *Batchelor of Divinity*, in which he maintained this Point, *That there could be no true Church without Diocesan Bishops*; for which he was shrewdly ratled by Dr. *Holland* ‖, the KING's *Professor* in *Oxford*. By which we may guess at the Temper of our *Universities* at that Time: And had Mr. *Agate* lived in that Age,

* Fuller's *Hist. of* Cambridge, *p.* 128. ‡ Fuller's *Ch. Hist. l.* 9. *p.* 214. † *Ibid. p.* 218. ‡ Prynn's *Post-script to Unbishoping* Tim. *and* Titus, *p.* 35. ‖ Heylin's *Life of Abp.* Laud, p. 54.

Age, his *Fantaſtick Notions*, and *bitter Principles*, would have been *exploded* by his own *Fathers* and *Tutors*.

'TIS very well known, that Q. *Elizabeth* gave Countenance and Protection to thoſe *poor Dutch-men*, who were forced to leave their Native Country, by the *Terrors of the Inquiſition*, and the *Duke d'Alva's Cruelty*. On whom ſhe conferred many Priviledges, and gave them Leave to form themſelves into *Churches*, after the *Presbyterian Model*. In the Year 1567, ſome Members of the *Dutch Church* in *London* revolted from it, to avoid the Cenſures they had incurred by their Miſcarriages: This Matter being laid before the *Biſhop of London*, and the reſt of the *Queens Commiſſioners* for *Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical*, they made a Decree, 'That the ſaid *Dutch Church* 'ſhould continue in its Firſt Conſtitution, under its own Di- 'ſcipline, and in its Conformity with other *Reformed Chur-* 'ches; confirming the *Miniſters*, *Elders* and *Deacons* in their 'Adminiſtrations. They further declared all ſuch as had made a Defection from this Church, *To be ſtubborn and unquiet Perſons*. The like *Favour* was expreſſed to this Church, upon the very ſame Occaſion, by a ſucceeding *Biſhop of London*, Dr. *King*; who made an Order, bearing Date *Auguſt* 9th 1615, for the Maintenance of this Churches Cuſtom, by which he enjoyned, 'That no Member of the ſaid Churches that had offen- 'ded, and thereby deſerved their Cenſures, ſhould depart from 'thoſe Congregations, and joyn themſelves to any PARISH 'CHURCH, before he had been cenſured for his Offence, or 'otherwiſe Reconciled himſelf *. Here we have a *Famous Biſhop* Forbidding Perſons to leave a *Presbyterian Congregation*, to Joyn themſelves to an *Epiſcopal Church*. Did he and his Brethren *condemn* theſe *Dutch* Miniſters as ſo many *Uſurpers*? Did they *look upon their Congregations as out of the Church*, and *cut off from Chriſts Myſtical Body*, becauſe not united to the *Epiſcopat*? No! Theſe *Worthies*, who were firſt concerned in the *Reformation of this Kingdom*, would have *abhorred* thoſe *peeviſh Principles* which my *Antagoniſt* glories in. There is no Occaſion to produce other Inſtances of this Nature, when we have the Author of *The Clergymans Vade Mecum*, who was far enough from being a Friend to the Diſſenters, *openly confeſſing*, 'That where there was One Man in 'the Time of Q. *Elizabeth*, that believed *Epiſcopacy* to be of *Apoſtolical* or *Divine Original*, there are many Hundreds that believe

* Strypes *Hiſt. of the Reformation*, p. 507.

'believe it *now* both at *Home* and *Abroad*, &c.* Whether this *Alteration* be owing to the *greater Illumination*, or *Ambition* of the preſent Age, 'tis none of my Province to determine.

HOWEVER, though *Preſbyterians* may be *condemned* by ſome as *no Chriſtians*, yet I hope this is the Senſe but of a *particular Faction*, and that the *Church* in *general* may be Vindicated from thoſe *Uncharitable Principles*. Mr. *Agate* indeed very *confidently* affirms, *That Valid Ordination is an Eſſential Point*; *That* Preſbyterian Ordination *has never been eſteemed Valid*; *And that Diſſenting Meetings are no Churches*, [p. 350.] And in a former Pamphlet he declares *Epiſcopacy neceſſary to the Being of a Church*; *and that Foreign Proteſtants deſpiſe God's Ordinances, and UN-CHURCH themſelves.* [p. 109.] So ſays this *modeſt* Gentleman. But that the *Church of England* in *general* has not eſpouſed his *peeviſh Principles*, may (I humbly conceive) be demonſtrated from her *publick Offices* and *Prayers*. On *June* 5th 1689, there was a *publick Faſt* appointed, to beg of God *Succeſs in the War*, juſt then declared againſt the *French King*. I have by me the *Form of Prayer* uſed on that Occaſion: There is One that carries this Title, *A Prayer for all the Reformed Churches*; which thus begins: O God *the Father of Mercies*--- *We now preſent our Supplications and Prayers at the Throne of Grace, in behalf of all the* Reformed Churches, *beſeeching thee to look down with an Eye of Mercy and Pity, upon the ſad and mournful Eſtate of ſuch of them whom thou haſt delivered over to the Hands of ſuperſtitious and mercileſs Men, who have compelled ſo many of them to defile themſelves with their Idolatrous Worſhip*, &c. This Prayer has a plain Reference to the perſecuted Proteſtants in *France*, who were conſtrained to go to Maſs againſt their own Conſciences. 'Tis known to the whole World, that they were all *Preſbyterians*, and yet acknowledged to be *real Churches*, by all our *Engliſh Clergy*, in their moſt ſolemn Acts of Worſhip. I find the very ſame Expreſſions in the Form of Prayer appointed for the *Faſt* obſerved on *March* 12. in the ſame Year. Since Her *Majeſty*'s Acceſſion to the Throne, we had a Faſt-Day on *Jan.* 19. 1703-4. Another on *April* 4th 1705. And in the publick Offices of theſe Days, there are particular Prayers for *all the Reformed Churches*, containing the ſame Petitions with thoſe already mentioned, the laſt Clauſe only

* *Preface to the 2d pt. p.* 41.

excepted. In the *Collect* uſed *April* 4. God was addreſſed, *To make Her* Majeſty *an inſtrument of preſerving his true Religion in ours, and* all other Reformed Churches. On Auguſt 23 1705. we had a Day of Thankſgiving for the Succeſs of Her *Majeſty*'s Arms. In the publick Forms appointed for that Day, I find a *Collect* with this Title, *A Prayer for all Mankind, eſpecially for the Reformed Churches*; which thus begins: *O God, the Creator and Governour of the World---- We beſeech thee to extend thy Compaſſion and Favour to all Mankind, more eſpecially to the* Reformed Churches abroad, *&c.* This very *Form* was alſo uſed in our Churches on the Thankſgiving-Day *Decemb.* 31. 1706, and on *May* 1. 1707. I have proved in a former Treatiſe, by many and unexceptionable Teſtimonies, that all the Miniſters of the *Reformed Churches*, both *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts*, have no other than a *Presbyterian Ordination*. Which, according to Mr. *Agate*'s Doctrine, is a meer Nullity, and their Aſſemblies are no Churches. But then why doth this *Gentleman* pray for them as real Churches? What can we think of him and his hot-headed Faction, who ſay one thing in the *Deſk*, and the quite contrary in their *Pulpits*? Who tell their people, that *Preſbyterian Congregations* are no Churches to *gratify their Malice*, and yet can acknowledge to *God*, that they are Churches to *ſave their Benefices*? Either they believe their *own Doctrine*, or they do not; if they do, then when they offered up the foremention'd Petitions, they *compaſſed God with Lies*, and their *Creator with Deceit*; if they do not believe it, why do they obtrude it upon their credulous Diſciples as an important Goſpel Truth? Is it not the ready way to make Men Infidels and Atheiſts, when ſome who ſerve at the Altar ſhall thus prevaricate with *God*, the *World*, and their *own Conſciences*? If Mr. *Agate* has any Modeſty left, he muſt no more *object* againſt *Occaſional Conformity*, when his own Prayers, ſo inconſiſtent with his *avowed Actions*, look ſo very well like an Hypocritical *mocking with God*, and *dallying* with *ſacred Things*. And ſince Mr. *Roberts*, in his *Okehampton Sermon*, p. 28. hath thought fit to make *Epiſcopacy* neceſſary to the *Being of a Chriſtian Church*, I would recommend it to him before the Return of the next *Viſitation*, to reconcile theſe Principles with his own Prayers, *& erit mihi Magnus Apollo*, he ſhall have me for a Proſelyte.

UPON

UPON mentioning Mr. *Roberts*, it may not be amiſs to make a few Remarks on that Scheme of Church Government, which that Gentleman has preſented to the World in his late *Viſitation Sermon*, being invited thereunto by Mr. *Agate*. 'Tis granted in this Sermon, *That meer Presbyters are Scripture Biſhops: That theſe might rule and govern the Affairs of the Church in the Apoſtles Abſence, and when they had no fixed Biſhops among them: That the Perſons called Biſhops in the Epiſtles to* Timothy *and* Titus *were of the Second Order*, pag. 18. i. e. meer Preſbyters: *That at the firſt planting of Churches, the Presbyters were for ſome time intruſted with the Government of them; the Apoſtles not thinking it neceſſary to fix Biſhops every where immediately; But afterward finding that this Parity among the Governours was* Inconvenient, *they fixed ſome of the higheſt Order in all Churches, and confined them within certain Limits: That the Unity of the Church might be preſerved by the conſtant Reſidence of a Supream Governour among them*, &c. p. 20. He owns, That *Biſhops* were not *generally fixed* when St. *Clemens* wrote his Epiſtle, throughout the whole of which by *Biſhops and Presbyters we are to underſtand thoſe of the ſecond Order*, p. 19. On which Scheme *I* would remark.

1. THAT this *Hypotheſis* deſtroys either the *Divine Inſtitution* of *Epiſcopacy*, or the *Infallibility* of the *Apoſtles*; for when they intruſted the *Government* of the *Church* with *Preſbyters*, they either acted as *meer Men*, and purſued thoſe *Methods* which *common Prudence* did ſuggeſt unto 'em, or elſe they acted as *divinely inſpired* Perſons; for in one of theſe two Capacities they muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed to act. If they acted as *meer Men* in ſettling Church Government, it muſt be of a variable Nature, and may at any time be altered by a Humane Authority. If they acted as *divinely inſpired Perſons*, how came it to paſs that they could not foreſee that this *Parity among the Governours would prove* Inconvenient. Nothing is more uſual than for *Worldly Politicians* to change their Meaſures, becauſe of ſudden and unforeſeen Emergencies. But that the Spirit of *God*, which guided the *Apoſtles*, ſhould be ignorant of an *Inconvenience* that would ariſe within the compaſs of 40 or 50 Years; this looks extremely odd. However, the *Diſſenters* may pardon this Gentleman, if he turns them out of the *Covenant*, when he advances a *Notion* ſo deragatory to the *Apoſtles*, and to that *Holy Spirit*, which they were influenced by.

2. AGAIN; this Scheme is contradictory to it ſelf; for he pretends, that when the *Apoſtles* ſaw a *Parity inconvenient*, they *fixt ſome of the Higheſt Order in all Churches.* [p. 20.] And yet confeſſes, that when St. *Clement* wrote his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* Biſhops were not *generally fixed.* [p. 19.] Whereas this Epiſtle was written after the Death of the *Apoſtles*. St. *Clemens* particularly affirms, 'That both 'Peter and Paul had ſuffered Martyrdom. And of the *Apoſtles* in general, whom he calls the *Pillars* of the *Church.* He aſſerts, 'That they had been perſecuted unto Death *. Nor have we reaſon to ſuppoſe that any one of the ſacred Colledge was at that time living, St. *John* perhaps only excepted. So that Mr. *Roberts* ſuppoſes the *Apoſtles* to fix ſome of the *Higheſt Order* in all *Churches*, when according to his own calculation they muſt be ſilent in their Graves.

3*dly*, 'TIS worthy our Remark, that this Gentleman's Arguments againſt the *Validity* of *Presbyterian Ordination* are purely *Negative*, and therefore of no Value. He urges, *That St.* Paul, *in his Charge to the* Elders *of* Epheſus, *ſays not a word about* Ordination, *nor gives them any caution about ſuch as were to be admitted into Holy Orders*; and therefore, *the Power of Ordination did not belong unto them*, [p. 16, 17.] and he argues moſtly from the *Apoſtles* ſilence on this Head, when he gives the *Presbyters* directions about other Matters. But I may as well urge, That becauſe St. *Paul* ſaid *nothing* to theſe *Elders* about *Baptizing*, or conſecrating the *Euchariſt*, therefore they had *no Power* to adminiſter the *Sacraments.* This Argument is as good as his, *viz.* Becauſe St. *Paul* made no mention of *Ordination*, therefore they had no *Authority* to *Ordain*: But the Truth of it is, they are both *Negative* Arguments, and therefore conclude juſt nothing at all.

4*thly*, ACCORDING to this *Gentleman's* Reaſoning, the *Presbyterian Government* will be the ſafeſt Method. He Argues, *That it is acknowledged on* all Hands, *that thoſe which are Baptized by Men in* Epiſcopal Orders, *are admitted into the Chriſtian Church. And therefore this muſt be the* ſafeſt Courſe, the *Validity of others* Baptiſm *being a Diſputable Point.* [p. 20.] But I may as well argue thus, 'Tis agreed by *both Parties*, (ſuppoſing he ſpeaks the ſenſe of his Friends) that in the firſt planting of Churches *meer Preſbyters* were intruſted with the Government of them. But it is denyed by *one* Party, that the *Apoſtles* did afterwards fix *Biſhops* of an *high-*

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* Clem. Rom. *Ep.* 1, *ad* Cor. *p.* 13.

er Order in all Churches; therefore the ſafeſt Courſe is to Conform to what both are agreed in, and ſo continue to govern the Church by *Presbyters*. This Argument will be found of as much weight as his.

I might make other Remarks on this *Gentlemans* performance; But ſince his Sermon is thought worthy a 2*d*. Impreſſion, my intelligence deceives me very much, if one or other betwixt *Berwick* and the *Lands-end*, will not vouchſafe it a full and formal Anſwer, and ſhall not anticipate what may be done by an abler Hand.

THUS have I prov'd, That a *Preſbyterian Ordination* makes us Lawful Miniſters; That our *Aſſemblies* are *Parts* of CHRIST's *Catholick Church*; That our *Non-ſubjection* to *Epiſcopacy* makes us not *Sciſmaticks*, becauſe the *ſame Authority* which gives the *Biſhops* their *Juriſdiction* hath *exempted* us from it. Mr. *Agate* thinks fit to tell the World, *That I have declared again and again, That 'tis indifferent whether People Communicate with the Eſtabliſh'd Church, or with the Conventicle*, [p. 344.] But in this he has miſrepreſented me; There are ſome think it *unlawful* to worſhip *God* in a *Meeting*, others perhaps in a *Church*: And I never thought it a *Thing indifferent* to Perſons under theſe *Perſwaſions*. I have indeed owned to him, That Men may *chuſe* their own *Miniſters* as well as their own *Phyſicians*; Nor has he produced any Argument to the contrary; Nor has he any *juſt reaſon* to exclaim againſt me, for *diſſenting* from a Church conteſs'd by me to be *a NOBLE PART of the Reformation* [p. 343.] For I am united with Her in thoſe Things which really *Ennoble* Her, that is, Her DOCTRINE, and the ESSENTIALS of WORSHIP.

Mr. *Agate* has been very inquiſitive concerning Me, *whether I am a* Preſbyterian, *or an* Independent? I know no obligation I am under to ſatisfie him in theſe Enquiries; however, to prevent his *ſpoyling more Paper* by ſuch *impertinent Demands*, I tell him, That I am not aſhamed to own my ſelf of the Number of thoſe *Proteſtant Diſſenters*, who go under the Denomination of *Presbyterians*: But if the Queſtion be, Whether the *Scotiſh* or *Genevan Platform* be in all its Branches, a *Divine Inſtitution*, and therefore *unalterable*? I am no *Presbyterian* in that Senſe, and know but few that are. My *Principles*, which Mr. *Agate* pretends I am *afraid* or *aſhamed to own*, may be conſidered, either as they relate to *Chriſtian Doctrines*, and theſe may be found in the *Articles* of the *Church of England*, to which I have cheerfully ſubſcribed; Or as they

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relate to *Church Government*, and these may be found in *Bishop* Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*. I look upon *Magistracy* as an *Ordinance of God*; But he has not made *Monarchy* or *Aristocracy*, or any *particular Species* of *Government*, necessary to all Mankind. Just so, I am fully perswaded that the *Gospel Ministry* is an *Institution* of *Jesus Christ*; But I cannot find that he has particularly determined, that every *National Church* must be necessarily cast either into an *Episcopal* or *Presbyterian Model*: And see no reason, why the *Queen* and *Parliament* may not Establish the one in *Scotland*, as well as the other in *England*.

AFTER all, 'tis *Necessity* not *Choice*, that makes me a *Dissenter* from the *Bishops*. I was designed for the *Ministry* by my *Parents*, who gave me an *Education* suitable to such an *End*, being excluded the *Publick Establishment* by such *Oaths* and *Subscriptions*, as under my *present apprehensions* I cannot comply with; I conceive *I* may innocently accept that *Indulgence* the *Law* allows, and preach to those that are willing to hear me; which hitherto I have done, *I* thank GOD, without making it my Business to *Revile* or *Censure* those that *differ* from me. As for the *Laiety*, *I* take it to be every Man's Duty to Worship *God* in the best manner he can. *If* a Person finds a stinted *Liturgy* is best adapted to excite his Devotion, *I* will not disswade him from the use of it. *If* another finds that the constant repitition of the same Words dulls his Affections, and on the other hand, that a Variety of Expression tends to command his Attention, and enflame his Desires; I make no doubt but he may warrantably attend on our Assemblies. And I can see no Reason why a Man may not *judge* for himself without *condemning* another. If there be some who think it *lawful* to communicate with the Established Church, but more *eligible* to do it in a Dissenting Congregation, I know not why the *Occasional Conformity* of a few such should be Damned for a scandalous *Hypocrisy*, when 'tis fairly consistent with their avow'd Principles. I hope the Reader will pardon this short Digression, which the repeated Insults of my Adversary have made necessary.

Mr. *Agate* pretends, *That the Church of* England *is so far from laying any great Stress upon particular Ceremonies, that they have desired the* Dissenters *to name those Ceremonies which they would have altered or laid aside* [p. 306.]; *and they are ready to gratify 'em, as far as the Honour of God, the Catholick Church, and Rules of Decency, will give leave. But the Dissenters won't bring in a List of their Exceptions.* Whereas all

all this is a perfect *Fiction*, and directly contrary to what is true in Matter of Fact, as will appear by those Steps that were publickly taken by both Parties at the late *Revolution*.

When the Prince of *Orange* came to *London*, the Bishop of that City, with his Clergy, waited on him, to return him their Thanks for his generous Assistance. And there being several Dissenting Ministers in his Train, his *Lordship* was pleased to take particular Notice of them in his Address to the *Prince*. A few Days after, Dr. *Bates*, with the rest of the Dissenting Ministers, paid their Acknowledgments unto him, telling him, 'They should all most willingly have chosen *that* for the Season of paying this Duty to his *Highness*, when the Lord-Bishop and Clergy of *London* attended his *Highness* for the same purpose, had their Notice of that intended Application been so early as to make their more general Attendance possible to them at that time. Therefore, though they did now appear in a *distinct* Company, they did not on a DISTINCT ACCOUNT--- *&c.* * When the *Prince* and *Princess* were declared *King* and *Queen*, they were congratulated by the *Dissenting Ministers*, who desired their Majesties, *To use their Wisdom and Authority to establish a firm Union of their Protestant Subjects, and to compose the Differences between them in things of less Moment concerning Religion* †. So that by their putting themselves under the *Bishop of London*'s Protection, and by these publick Declarations, they did demonstrate to all the World their Desire of a Coalescence, without the Extirpation of Episcopacy. Nay, 'tis confessed by a Dignitary of the Church, *That the more moderate and wiser part of the* Dissenters, *would have been glad to be taken into the National Establishment* ‡. On the other hand, when the *Convocation* met, and an *Accommodation* was proposed, Dr. *Jane* was chosen *Prolocutor* on purpose to prevent it, who concluded his Latin Oration with *Nolumus Leges Angliæ mutari*, We will not have the Laws of *England* changed. 'And though many 'Arguments were used to bring the most Stiff of the Inferior 'Clergy to a charitable Condescension, and the much desired 'Union; yet all to little purpose ‖. There was (*says the 'Bishop of* Sarum) a formed *Resolution* of consenting to no 'Alterations at all in Order to that Union †. Now to what End shall we propose the Alterations we desire, when the *Convocation*

* *Hist. of* England, *Vol.* 3. *p.* 522. † *Ib. p.* 523. ‡ *Ib. p.* 551. ‖ *Ib. p.* 552. † *Reflections on the Rights, &c. of an Eng. Convocation, p,* 16.

vocation has told us, *that none at all will be consented to.*

UPON the mentioning of this, I think my self obliged to Vindicate the *Memory* of King *William* from those *Aspersions* which Mr. *Agate* has cast upon him, on the Account of that *Accommodation* which he attempted between the *Church* and the *Dissenters*. This *Gentleman* gives us a strange *Model of Discipline*, consisting of many *odd* particulars: One of which was, *That* Laymen *were to be allowed to administer the* Sacraments, *if they had a Fancy for it, without any Ordination.* And positively affirms, *That King* William *designed to set up this Moderate Episcopacy in all his Three Kingdoms* [p. 352.] For the *proof* of which Assertion he quotes *The Wolf stript*: But the *Author* of that Pamphlet has not the Impudence *directly* to affirm this *scandalous* Tale; and only *offers* some *Presumptions*, as he calls them *, to induce us to suspect a Thing of this Nature. But what are these *Presumptions*? Nothing but this: There was a *Book* published by some *French Refugees* in *Holland*, in which they proposed *Expedients* for Reconciling the *Church of England* and the *Dissenters*. These *Gentlemen* suppose that *Laymen* may administer the *Sacraments* by *an Extraordinary Call*. But what is all this to the late King? 'Tis not pretended that this *Book* was written by His *Direction*, or that he ever so much as *saw* it: So that Mr. *Agate* has no *Foundation* at all to support that *outrageous Calumny*, which he has published against His late Sovereign. The truth on't is, King *William* attempted to *compromise* the Differences betwixt the *Church* and the *Dissenters*: To this end he appointed, by *special Commission*, all the *Bishops* in *England*, who owned his Authority, with several other Eminent Divines, *To consult of proper Expedients for the healing of our Breaches* †. Dr. *Nichols*, a celebrated Author, gives us the Names of those Reverend Persons who actually revised the *Liturgy* and *Canons*, and prepared a Scheme to be laid before the *Convocation*; and these were the A-bps. *Tillotson* and *Tenison*, the Bps. *Burnet*, *Kidder*, *Stillingfleet*, and *Patrick* ‖. And can it be imagined that these Learned Worthies would consent to such a Hotch-potch of *Episcopacy* as Mr. *Agate* talks of? Or that they would allow *Laymen to administer the Sacraments*? Either these Venerable Fathers must be in a Conspiracy

* *Wolf stript*, &c. *p.* 33. *Ed.* 4. † *Hist. of* England, *Vol.* 3. *p.* 552. ‖ *Apparatus ad Defens. Eccles. Anglican. p.* 96.

ſpiracy againſt their own Church and Order, or elſe our Author has publiſhed a downright *Falſhood*, and moſt egregious *Calumny* againſt King *William*. But he that, in Defiance to the *Votes* of the *Houſe of Peers*, durſt tell his Congregation, *That if the late King had not died when he did, the preſent Queen muſt*, may aſſume to himſelf a Liberty of ſaying what he pleaſes.

IN my *Defence* I urged, That *Diſſenting Congregations* are as ſo many *Independent Troops*, that whileſt we are ready to joyn againſt the *Common Enemy*, our Fellow-Soldiers have no Reaſon to quarrel with us, for not obſerving exactly the ſame Modes and Poſtures that they are ranged in. In Anſwer to this, Mr. *Agate* urges, *That inſtead of ruining Satan's Kingdom, we build it up. That the Deiſts and Libertines give us the Right-hand of Fellowſhip, and are our Guides*, [p. 237, *&c.*] Filling ſeveral pages with a malevolent Harangue to this purpoſe, but not producing one Evidence to ſupport ſo Black a Charge: I ſhall therefore paſs by his *Romantick Declamation*, only obſerving this one thing to the Reader, That if he pleaſes to conſult Dr. *Sacheverell*'s late Collection, under the Head of *Blaſphemy*, *Irreligion* and *Hereſy*, he will find no *Diſſenters* charged with the Impieties there complained of; whileſt ſeveral *Clergymen* are in his Black Liſt, and one of them is at this Day officiating as ſuch in the Eſtabliſhed Church. And where is the Juſtice? Where is the Conſcience of making us reſponſible for the Hereſies of theſe Men, who were nurſed up in the Church, who ſerved at its Altars, or lived and died in its Communion? I don't think there is any Juſt Reaſon to impute the Irregularities of a few *particular* Members to the Church in *general*; but ſure there is much leſs Reaſon to impute them to the *Diſſenters*.

Mr. *Agate* fancies that the bare reſembling of our *Congregations* to *Independant Troops*, is enough to expoſe the *Notion*: For ſhould our Engliſh Soldiers *quit their Regiments, and refuſe Obedience to the Duke of* Marlborough, *or his Officers, they would be hang'd for Deſerters*; all which is true, but nothing to the purpoſe. For Her Majeſty has not given any Perſon a *Commiſſion* to *Command* a *Troop* or *Regiment* independent on the aid *Duke*: But had She granted ſuch a *Commiſſion*, his *Grace* would have no *Authority* over thoſe who acted in Purſuance of it. This is our Caſe, the *Queen* and *Parliament* have exempted us from the *Biſhops Juriſdiction*, and therefore our *Non-Subjection* to them is not Criminal: nor is the Objection urged by *our Author* any way pertinent.

that the Toleration *doth not exempt any Perſons wholly from the* Biſhops *temporal Juriſdiction* [p. 330.] 'Tis own'd that their *Lordſhips* are *Peers* in *Parliament*, and a part of the *Legiſlature*, that they are uſually *Juſtices* of the *Peace*, and have a Power to keep Courts for the *Probat* of *Wills* and other things. Nor do I know any *Diſſenters* ſo ſilly as to pretend an *Exemption* from their *Authority* in theſe Reſpects.

'TIS pretended by our *Author*, that there are *ſtill ſeveral Laws and Eccleſiaſtical Canons in Force*, (beſides thoſe mentioned in the *Toleration* Act) *whereby all People are required to Conform to the Epiſcopal Church* [p. 297.] And in the Margin he cites *Magna Charta*, 25. *Hen.* 8. *Cap.* 19. I fear this Gentleman is as bad a *Lawyer* as he is a *Hiſtorian*; or otherwiſe he muſt have known that an *Eccleſiaſtical Canon*, has no *Validity* at all without, much leſs againſt the *Sanction* and *Authority* of the *Civil Powers*. And that an *Act of Parliament*, ſuperſedes all former *Statutes*, as far as they are inconſiſtent with the main intent and purpoſe of it: Which is the Caſe of that *Act of Indulgence* under which we Claim. I cannot find any thing in *Magna Charta*, which may ſeem to make for his purpoſe; unleſs it be this Clauſe, *That the Church of* England *ſhall be free, and ſhall have her whole Rights and Liberties inviolable*. I hope Mr. *Agate* does not expect that our *Biſhops* ſhould aſſume the ſame *Liberty* that the *popiſh Prelates* then had, of bearding their King, and exempting the Clergy from all *temporal Juriſdiction*. Nor can I imagine what *Liberty* they are now deprived of, unleſs it be that of *Perſecuting* and *Oppreſſing* their Neighbours: Which I hope, the beſt, wiſeſt, and greateſt part of them do not deſire.

AS for the *Statute of* 25 *Hen.* 8. *Cap.* 19. it was made on purpoſe to *leſſen* the Authority of the *Biſhops*, and to *exalt* the Regal Supremacy. For which Reaſon I am apt to think Mr. *Agate* never read it; and that if he had, he could not have been ſo weak as to produce it on this occaſion.

THIS Gentleman falls foul upon me as if I did reproach *the Church of England*, when I *challenged him to name one ſuch* VOLUNTARY Penitent as *J. H*-----*n* of this City. I hope there are in the *Eſtabliſhed Church* many *real* and *ſincere Penitents*. 'Tis plain enough, that the weight of my Expreſſion lay on the Word *Voluntary*. And I don't think that he can name me one of his Church, who did Freely and Voluntarily, without any *Compulſion* or *Order* from the *Court*, beg publick Pardon of *God* and the *Congregation*, for the Scandal which he had given. This was done by *J. H.* ſome 7 or 8 Years ago.

ago. Since which time his Converſation hath been unblamable for ought ever I heard to the contrary. And I appeal to all Mankind, whether Mr. *Agate* diſcovers a *Chriſtian Spirit*, in taking all Occaſions to inſult this Man upon the Account of thoſe Miſcarriages he hath *confeſſed* and *forſaken*. When ſuch a perpetual Noiſe and Clamour is made about one *ſcandalous Perſon*, I hope ſuch are not very frequent in *our Aſſemblies*.

IN my *Defence* I quoted Biſhop *Stillingfleet* affirming that *no Church can be charg'd with Separation from the true Catholick Church, but what may be proved to ſeparate its ſelf in ſomething neceſſary to the Being of the Catholick Church. And ſo long as it doth not ſeparate as to theſe Eſſentials, it cannot ceaſe to be a true Member of the Catholick Church.* Whence I inferr'd that we are not Schiſmaticks, *becauſe we do not ſeparate in any Eſſential Point*. To which Mr. *Agate* Anſwers, *that Obedience to the Biſhops and Valid Ordination are Eſſential Points* [p. 350.]; and in theſe things we ſeparate, but theſe Objections have been largely conſidered in the Body of this Treatiſe, to which I refer the Reader.

BUT by quoting this Biſhop, *I have expoſed my Honeſty*: Why ſo *I* wonder! Have *I* quoted him as Mr. *Agate* did *Oliver Cromwell* and Mr. *Love*, and foiſted in whole Sentences directly contrary to his declared Senſe? No! 'tis not denied that *I* have cited his very Words. But the Biſhop in another Book declares us to be *Schiſmaticks*, and what can *I* help that? If he lays down ſuch *Principles* as will *acquit* us in one Book, and yet *condemns* us in another, *I* ſee no reaſon that *I* have to be blamed, if *I* rather chooſe to credit him, when arguing *cooly* and without any *Prepoſſeſſion*, than when engaged in *Controverſy* and heated by *Oppoſition*.

I concluded my *Defence* with an Appeal to the *Houſe of Lords*, who in their Debates about the *Occaſional Bill*, declared, 'They could not think the *Diſſenters* can be properly call'ed *Schiſmaticks*, at leaſt that differ in no *Eſſential Point*. To this Mr. *Agate* Repleis, *That this was only the talk of one of their Managers*. [p. 356.] But it was ſpoken in their Lordſhips *Names*, and publiſhed by their expreſs *Command* and *Order*: Which *I* humbly conceive infers their Approbation of it: for had they *diſliked* the Notion they would not have caus'd it to be *Printed*.

'TIS further urged, *That the* Lords *declared againſt Occaſional Conformity* [Ibid.] But not in thoſe words which Mr. *Agate* has hudled up together; but this is their real Expreſſion, 'They own it a Scandal to *Religion*, that Perſons ſhould *con-*

'*form* ONLY for a Place. And if there be any who make their Interest their *only* or *principal* End in Religious Duties, I think them deserving a very black Character. But how will this *Gentleman* prove this against any Dissenter? Besides, their *Lordships* very justly observe, 'It is no certain Inference, that 'because a Man receives the Sacrament in the Church, he can 'therefore *conform* in every other particular *.

THE last Resort which Mr. *Agate* has, is to the Bishop of *Sarum*'s Letter [p. 359.] in which he charges the *Dissenters* with *Schism*. On which I would observe:

[1.] THIS Letter bears date *June* 27. 1708, and yet Mr. *Agate*'s First Part of *Plain Truth*, in which we were threatned with this very Letter, was published some Weeks before; the which is a Mystery he hath not unriddled in any of his subsequent Performances.

[2.] ALLOWING it to be Genuine, we may wonder at the *Confidence* of this *Gentleman*, how he could write to the *Bishop of Sarum* after he had so unworthily Abused him in Print. And to convince his *Lordship* that his *Gratitude* is equal to his *Modesty*, he has never published a Pamphlet since, without paying some *scurrilous Reflection* or other upon the *Bishop of Sarum*.

[3.] THO' the *Bishop* thinks us Faulty, he doth not Unchurch us, nor rank us amongst *Jews* and *Pagans*: But supposes that a *Mistaken Dissenter* may *be in a State of Grace and Pardon*. And Mr. *Agate*'s violent Temper is as much condemned as our Separation.

[4.] I made no Appeal to the *Bishop of Sarum*, but to the *House of Peers*; and though his *Lordship* makes a *shining Figure* there, he is but a *single Star* in that *Bright Constellation*. And though the *Bishop* may think me in an Error, I shall not scruple to acknowledge that his Services to *Church* and *State* have been so Eminent, as to deserve Respect and Veneration from every *True Protestant* and *Good English-man*.

IF Mr. *Agate* thinks fit to make any Reply to what has been now offered, I would recommend this to his Consideration; Whether it would not conduce more to his own Honour, and

* *Proceeding relating to the Bill for preventing*, &c. *p.* 36.

and others Profit, to endeavour our Conviction by *Argument* and *Reason*, rather than to make us Odious by *ſcandalous* and *falſe Repreſentations*. I ſhall conclude with this Deſire, that both *Churchmen* and *Diſſenters* would follow St. *Paul*'s Counſel, *Eph.* 4. 1, 2, 3. *To walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith they are called, with Lowlineſs and Meekneſs, with Long-ſuffering* FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE, thereby *endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

The FATHERS *I had Occaſion to cite are of theſe following* Editions.

	Printed at	In the Year
Clementis Romani Epiſtolæ Ignatii Epiſtolæ	Oxon.	1677
Irenæi Opera	Amſterda.	1646
Tertulliani Opera	Baſil.	1526
Clementis Alexandrini Opera	Paris.	1641
Juſtini Martyris Opera	Cologn.	1688
Cypriani Opera	Cologn.	1686
Euſebii, Socrat. Sozom. Evag. Theod. Hiſt. Eccleſ. 3 Vol.	Paris.	1633
Athanaſii Opera, 2 Vol.	Mayence.	1679
Epiphanii Opera, 2 Vol.	Cologn.	1686
Greg. Nazianzeni Opera, 2 Vol.	Cologn.	1682
Hieronomi Opera, 4 Vol.	Cologn.	1685
Auguſtini Opera, 16 Vol. 8vo.	Baſil.	1524
Baſilii Opera, 3 Vol.	Lyons.	1563
Optatus de Schiſmate Donat.	Paris.	1638
Salviani Opera	Antwerp.	1702
Leonis magni Opera	Paris.	1617
Rabanus Maurus de Clericorum Inſtitut.	Antwerp.	1589
Concilia Gener. & Provin. Gr. Lat. per Binium, 5 Vol.	Cologn.	1532
	Cologn.	1618

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Poſt-

Poſt-ſcript.

MR. *Agate* continuing to make a Clamour about a CONFERENCE, and *Subſcribing* of *Principles*, I ſent him lately the following Letter.

SIR, *March* 27.

BEing inform'd that you took Occaſion to inſult me on *Jan.* 30. as well as on *Friday* laſt, for declining a Conference, and being willing to obviate that Clamour for the future; I have now addreſſed my ſelf unto you, to let you know, that though I am not fond of a publick Diſputation, nor to be haloo'd along the Streets, (which was the Treatment you know a Diſſenting Miniſter met with, not many Months ago, from your civil and well-inſtructed Auditory) yet, if the Publication of my Sentiments to the whole World will not content you, I will meet you and half a dozen of your Friends with an equal number of mine, and *ſubſcribe* my Principles upon theſe following Conditions:

1. If the Gentlemen preſent, upon view of the Books which I produce, will ſubſcribe a Certificate, atteſting, that thoſe *Quotations* of yours, which I object againſt as Forgeries, are, or are not to be found in the *Authors* you have cited.

2. If they will alſo certify, that you have, or have not proved theſe Matters of Fact, which I declare to be downright Falſhoods.

3. If laſtly, you will Anſwer my Demands, and *ſubſcribe* your Principles relating to the State, I will then *ſubſcribe* mine which relate to the Government of the Church. *Sir*, you have your Choice, either to forbear your *Inſults* on this Head, or to accept the *Propoſals* of,

Your Humble Servant,

JOHN WITHERS.

7 JU66

TO this Letter I have yet received no Anſwer. When Mr. *Agate* will anſwer me, Whether the Princeſs of *Denmark* and Biſhop of *London* were guilty of a *Damning Sin*, when they went to *Nottingham*, and joyn'd with ſuch as declared for *Reſiſtance*; He may then ask me, Whether there be any Thing Faulty in the *Common-Prayer*: For *I* have as much Authority to Catechize him, as he me.

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FINIS.

ERRATA.

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